A

LETTER

TO A

FRIEND,

Mr. Bignell, of Banbury,

ON THE

LATE REVOLUTION

IN

FRANCE.

By Francis Eyre

1791.

BRITISH MUSEUM
30
MAY

This confidential Letter was written at the desire of a Friend, whose avocations and want of knowledge of the French tongue deprived him of those sources, from which due information was to be procured. Several persons, more from partiality for the writer, than merit in the work, having requested copies of it, has been the cause of its appearing in print. Neither vanity or lucre has been the least object. To avoid both, he has neither subscribed his name to it, nor offers it to sale.

ERRATA.

Page 8. Note, for 11th century read 14th century. p. 9. flushed r. fleshed. p. 27. unbottoned r. unbuttoned. p. 46. Ramboillet r. Rambouillet. p. 52. grenadier r. grenadiers. p. 55. Note, accident r. incident. p. 67. r. old maids. p. 68. Higgin's r. Higgon's. St. Maurs r. St. Maur. p. 72. Note, dele then.

These, and any other mistakes which have been committed by the errors of the press, the reader is desired to correct with his pen.

A LETTER

TO A

FRIEND, &c.

DEAR SIR,

YOU have been pleaſed to aſk my opinion concerning the aſtoniſhingchange of meaſures, which has lately taken place in a neighbouring kingdom; I readily aſſure you that an alteration in the ſyſtem of government, in other words, a revolution in France appears to me to have been undoubtedly neceſſary. The deranged ſtate of the finances, verging rapidly towards a national bankruptcy, and the oppreſſions of the people called loudly for it. It was the wiſh of every Frenchman, if we except poſſibly the courtiers who, as in moſt countries, are generally enriched at the expence of the public. Wherefore I perfectly agree with Mr.

Paine, that the ideas of liberty have taken ſuch deep root in the breaſts of the people, that it is ridiculous to ſuppoſe that a counter-revolution can happen: I mean that they will ever ſuffer themſelves again to be reduced to the ſlaviſh ſtate of their former government. We differ then only as to the mode and progreſs of this revolution. The advantages, which may poſſibly accrue from it hereafter, time alone can ſhow.

No man in France more ardently wiſhed to redreſs all grievances, and particularly the derangement of the finances, than the king himſelf. Mr. Paine allows him to be a good man, and on that account beloved by the nation. His Majeſty lamented the ambition of Lewis XIV. and the voluptuouſneſs of his grandfather, to which, with great probability, I may add the fatal alliance which he formed with America: for all theſe contributed to the ruin of the nation.

For this purpoſe he frequently conferred with his miniſters. Perceiving however that no redreſs could be obtained from their counſels, he recalled the parliaments, which his grand-father had diſſolved. He conſulted them. He requeſted their advice. But they, more ſtudious to eſtabliſh their own conſequence, than

than to attend to the public weal, offered no hints, no ſchemes towards the completion of an object of ſuch magnitude and importance. Wherefore his Majeſty, thus baffled in his good intentions, was reſolved to aſſemble the nobility and dignified clergy by their repreſentatives in the ſame manner as Henry IV. one of his predeceſſors, had heretofore done. Theſe were ſtiled the *Notables*.

The Parliament, ſenſible that ſuch a ſtep would totally annihilate their own importance, oppoſed the meaſure as much as poſſible, and gave the King to underſtand that the votes of ſuch an aſſembly, particularly upon the ſubject of taxation, would be incompetent without the concurrence of the third eſtate, ſuppoſing that he would never adopt a meaſure, which would in the end infallibly circumſcribe his own power. They were however miſtaken. His Majeſty was determined to reſcue the people from national diſgrace, from oppreſſion and from miſery. He had pledged his word, and was reſolved to keep it.

The idea of a national bankruptcy terrified no ſet of men ſo much as thoſe who had lent their money upon the ſecurity of the public funds. As long as they had received their intereſt with punctuality, they exhibited no ſymp-

toms of complaint againſt arbitrary power, or the deſpotiſm of the ſtate. But when government became ſlack in the payment of their dividends; when the embarraſſment of the treaſury to make them good was viſible, theſe men became the moſt zealous patriots, the profeſſed advocates for liberty.

At this moment Mr. Necker was miniſter of the finances. When he came into office it was eaſy for him to foreſee that a revolution was at hand. Many things had contributed towards it, and, as Mr. Paine obſerves, the intercourſe with America was not the * leaſt. Mr. Necker therefore was reſolved to have the merit of it. It was his intereſt to gain the ſtock-jobbers, and through them the people. To the former he promiſed ſecurity for their money. To the latter he held forth the cap of liberty and freedom. Even in the aſſembly itſelf he became a neceſſary man, no member being ſuppoſed equally capable of that branch of legiſlation. It was for theſe reaſons that all parties joined in procuring his recal after the King had diſmiſſed him. But when the ſtock-jobbers perceived that from finance, he attended to politics, they turned their backs upon him, as they did afterwards upon the Aſ-

* Modern philoſophy comes in for a great ſhare.

ſembly,

ſembly, when they ceaſed to purſue the grand object they had at heart. What was it to them if the conſtitution was good, or bad, provided their dividends were paid, and their capital ſecured? Thus we ſee for what reaſon Mr. Necker courted the ſtock-jobbers, and the ſtock-jobbers ſupported the miniſter, and ſtirred up the people againſt the lawful authority of the King. He was reſolved, as I ſaid, to have the merit of the revolution, which was then in embryo. But there were other men equally ambitious of that honor, and therefore, when he had ſerved their purpoſes, they turned their backs upon him alſo.

The King had diſmiſſed him, becauſe his calculations towards removing the national grievance were deficient. The ſtock-jobbers and the people however forced his Majeſty to recal him, and at his return he was received as the tutelar angel of France. When the Aſſembly had got all the powers of government into their own hands, they called upon him to produce his budget. Finding it impoſſible to anſwer their expectations, and ſeeing his popularity on the wane, he very prudently withdrew to his eſtate in Switzerland. The day of his return, I ſhould have remarked, was ordained *for ever* to be kept a feſtival.

But

But both the miniſter and the feſtival are now forgotten. *Sic tranſit gloria mundi!*

His Majeſty might have had another motive for diſmiſſing his miniſter. It is not improbable that he received ſome information of his ſiniſter dealings with the ſtock-jobbers and the people. Be that as it may, the diſmiſſion cauſed a general alarm. The preſs began to teem with the moſt incendiary and defamatory pamphlets. Gazettes and news-papers ſprung up like muſhrooms, replete with the moſt inflammable and combuſtible materials. The people in Paris were in a ſtate of the moſt alarming commotion. Meetings were held all over the city, and in particular at the *Palais-royale* (the reſidence of the Duke of Orleans) whereat every black and atrocious deed was hatched, and from thence iſſued. All was now uproar and confuſion. We need only call to mind the calamitous ſcene exhibited in London in the year 1780 to form ſome idea of the preſent moment in Paris, where the minds of the people, if poſſible, are more degraded and debaſed.

It was the dread of theſe mobs, which deterred the Kings of France from making Paris their place of reſidence. To guard againſt this riſing evil, an army was ordered to aſſemble round

round the ſkirts of the city. The motives for this meaſure are variouſly related. I will give you both ſides of the queſtion, and you will then judge for yourſelf. Mr. Paine affirms, with the popular party, that it was aſſembled with the view of caſhiering the members of the National Aſſembly, who were then ſitting at Verſailles. The people were likewiſe made to believe that the army was to reduce the city to aſhes, and to maſſacre all the inhabitants. If I may hazard a conjecture, it ſeems more probable that the King was adviſed to the meaſure for his own ſecurity, as alſo for that of the people and the capital. The army was to intimidate, and not to act offenſively, otherwiſe M. Broglio, one of the moſt experienced generals of the age, would certainly have made a different diſpoſition of it to what he did. If however the view of the court was ever ſo pure, their policy was very defective. It ſerved only to confirm the people in the ideas they had formed of the deſpotiſm of the ſtate, and conſequently augmented their fury and reſentment. By the eaſy communication they had with the army, and their frequent intercourſe with the ſoldiers, they ſoon debauched them from their duty by dint of money, and ſpecious arguments in favor of liberty.

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From eight to ten thouſand of the rabble now began to parade the ſtreets of Paris, and indiſcriminately to plunder the ſhops, houſes and convents. They ſeized upon the hoſpital for invalid ſoldiers, where they met with no reſiſtance, and furniſhed themſelves with ſome thouſands of muſquets, and ſeveral pieces of cannon. From thence they repaired to the Arſenal, which they plundered alſo, and marched directly for the Baſtile *. On this ſubject likewiſe there is a difference of opinion. The popular party, to palliate their ſavage cruelty towards M. Launey, the governor, gave out that he was puniſhed ſolely for his treachery. This report I ſhall not pretend to confute, as Mr. Paine takes no notice of it, and therefore muſt ſuppoſe it void of credit. The oppoſite party affirm, that his only fault was that of ſubmitting to a parley with the inſurgents, when he ſhould have drawn up the bridges, and retired within the works. Had he done this, they ſay, he might have bid defiance to the mob, without firing a ſingle gun, which he *never* did. Be that as it may, the mob ſeized him, and chopped off his head, without either

* The Baſtile was a fortreſs, like our Tower in London. It was built in the 11th century, for the defence of Paris againſt the Engliſh.

judge

judge or jury, paraded it through the ſtreets, and afterwards ſtuck it up as a trophy before the *Palais-Royale.*

Like hounds juſt fluſhed (if I may uſe the expreſſion) theſe inhuman wretches thirſted after more blood and carnage. Fury and madneſs ſeemed to mark all their ſteps. The Court became terrified, and diſmayed, as well they might. The Aſſembly, taking advantage of their conſternation, artfully ſeized that moment to propoſe to the king that the troops might be withdrawn. To refuſe, would be to confirm the ſuſpicions of the people. The army, or at leaſt what was left of it, was not to be relied upon. The crown, and poſſibly the life of the king, depended upon the anſwer. His majeſty therefore heſitated not a moment. He declared that he would not only give orders for the army to retire, but would, ſuch was his confidence in the people, go to Paris the next day unattended and without guards, and endeavour to ſettle every thing they could wiſh or expect from him.

This generous deportment of the king diſconcerted the views of deſigning men. They were fearful that the confidence which he ſeemed to place in the people might revive their loyalty and affections. To counteract

this, engroſſed all their attention. Their fears however were groundleſs. They had learnt their leſſons. The emiſſaries of the *Palais-Royale* had been both active and able inſtructors. They had taught them to believe that the king put himſelf into their hands through abſolute neceſſity, therefore they were to attribute nothing to the generous confidence of the monarch; for, in fact, it was only a tacit acknowledgment of his own defeat. In a word, he could not do otherwiſe.

The next day however Lewis XVI. faithful to his engagement, ſet off from Verſailles without a guard. When he arrived in Paris, though ſurrounded by an immenſe mob, he heard, not as heretofore, a ſingle huzza, or ſhout of *God ſave the king*, except from a venerable old man who, I ſuppoſe, could not diveſt himſelf of an old cuſtom, which was now going out of faſhion. Had he not been reſcued at the moment, he would have been torn to pieces by the mob for this ſlight tribute of loyalty. This anecdote I had from an eye-witneſs. The king, although he had every reaſon to fear for his life, (for a woman was killed by a muſket-ball not far from his perſon, which ſhot was undoubtedly intended for him) appeared compoſed and undaunted. He bore

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up againſt this diſgraceful and dangerous day with a courage which reflected the greateſt luſtre on the fortitude of his heart, and the elevation of his mind.

On his arrival at the Town-houſe, he confirmed the nomination of the people in favor of Meſſrs. Bailly and La Fayette. As the former appears to be a very ſingular character, it may not be amiſs to give you a little ſketch of it. He is a member of the Academy of Sciences, and has publiſhed ſome treatiſes on aſtronomy. That a man of his caſt of mind, given to ſuch abſtruſe ſtudies, ſhould quit his peaceable deſk for the tumult and uproar of popular commotion appears very ſingular indeed! This ſingularity of conduct however was ſurpaſſed by his boldneſs and effrontery to the king upon the preſent occaſion. After decorating his majeſty's hat with the national cockade, which undoubtedly was a pointed inſult, as it was the very badge and enſign of rebellion at that moment, he preſented the keys of the city to him, (for you will be pleaſed to obſerve he was then Mayor of Paris) and addreſſed his ſovereign as follows: "Sire, "theſe are the ſame keys which were pre- "ſented to your anceſtor, Henry IV. when "he had ſubdued his people. Now the peo-

" ple preſent them to you, after having con-
" quered their king."

His majeſty having ſuffered every thing that could gall and mortify him, was permitted to return to Verſailles. The queen awaited his arrival with the moſt impatient anxiety. When ſhe ſaw him approach, ſhe ran to meet him, and fainted away at his feet. From this incident we may eaſily form a judgment of the diſtreſſed feelings of this unfortunate Princeſs, and be apt to drop a tear of pity and compaſſion on her ſufferings.

Though the cruel, and indeed ſcandalous behaviour of the Pariſians had rent the king's heart with the moſt pungent grief, yet the demonſtrations of joy which the people of Verſailles teſtified upon his ſafe return, afforded ſome conſolation to the much injured monarch. Here he might have remained in peace, if the iniquitous meaſures of the cabal would have ſuffered it. But it was only in troubled waters they could fiſh with any proſpect of ſucceſs: it was from anarchy and confuſion alone they could expect to bring their vile projects to bear. If his popularity encreaſed, they knew full well that their influence muſt decline. To counteract this, they bent all their force. They were reſolved to

terrify

terrify the people into their meaſures, a manœuvre which they have always employed to this day, and, I am ſorry to add, with ſucceſs. For this purpoſe it was buzzed in their ears that plots were hatching, and armies collecting in favour of deſpotiſm and arbitrary power. It was alſo artfully and induſtriouſly inſinuated that no confidence could be placed in the king, who moſt aſſuredly would liſten to the pernicious counſels of his miniſters and courtiers, and adopt every meaſure towards the extinction of liberty.

Theſe reports had their effect. Add to which the high price of grain, for the year 1789 had been very unproductive, revived the former diſcontents of the people, which had ſubſided a little after his majeſty's gracious and paſſive deportment in Paris. The real ſcarcity of that neceſſary article of life however was not ſufficient of itſelf to accompliſh their deſigns; for though it was dear, there was always a ſupply. The cabal therefore was obliged to have recourſe to their old tricks, and as there was no proſpect of a real famine, they reſolved to create ſuch a one in appearance as would anſwer their purpoſes. Of this I ſhall ſpeak more at large hereafter, and in the mean time only obſerve that theſe reports to diſcredit

dit the king's intentions ſoon rouzed the people to action. They began to relent that they had ſuffered him to depart, and were reſolved to bring him back again to the capital. The Marquis de St. Heuregues, a ſeditious firebrand, attempted it at the head of 15 or 16 hundred of the rabble, who, like himſelf, were ready for any bloody deed and atrocious act. But M de Fayette oppoſed him with a body of the militia, reſerving that honor to himſelf on a future day.

The artificial ſcarcity of bread-corn gave a very favourable opportunity to thoſe who wiſhed to rid themſelves of their opponents. Every man they ſought to deſtroy was marked as a *monopolizer*, the ſure badge of proſcription at that moment, as the epithet *ariſtocrate* has ſince been. The firſt who was accuſed of monopoly was a M. de Fleſſelles. An anonymous, and more probably a forged letter was all the proof produced againſt him. This was ſufficient for the rabble. They dragged him in conſequence to the Town-houſe, and demanded immediate juſtice. The magiſtrates, who ſince the revolution had ſeized upon the adminiſtration of the police, ſeeming dilatory in pronouncing judgment upon him, the mob ruſhed in, ſeized their victim, and tore him to

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pieces in a moment, carrying his mangled carcaſs in bloody triumph through the ſtreets.

Meſſrs. Foulon and Berthier were the next objects of their miſguided fury. The former had been Comptroller of the Finances, the other Mayor of Paris. The firſt was accuſed of having uſed ſome harſh and imprudent expreſſions reflecting on the people. Poſſibly moved to indignation in ſeeing their exceſſes on the ſuppoſed and artificial ſcarcity of bread, he ſaid that if they were obliged to eat ſtraw, they would deſerve it. But the real cauſe of their diſpleaſure, or rather of the diſpleaſure of thoſe who had the direction of their motions, was his intended appointment to ſucceed M. Necker as miniſter, whom, like the ark of the covenant, none dared to approach with impunity. In their refined cruelty towards this unfortunate Gentleman, they affected to make him undergo the ſame ſufferings as were inflicted on Jeſus Chriſt. They crowned him with thorns, and when fainting and ſinking under their barbarous and cruel hands, they brought him vinegar to drink. Then they ſtruck off his head, which they fixed upon a pole, and carried it in proceſſion through the ſtreets, with a wiſp of ſtraw ſtuffed into the lifeleſs mouth.

M. Ber-

M. Berthier, his ſon-in-law, had been forcibly dragged by another diviſion of the mob from his country-houſe. The two parties met, and they had the inhumanity and unparalelled barbarity to force him to kiſs the bloody and mangled head of his near relation. Then, after repeated inſults, he underwent the ſame fate. A ſoldier immediately tore out his heart, and preſented it, ſtill beating and convulſive, to Meſſrs. de La Fayette and Bailly. Theſe outrages however on human nature were certainly perpetrated by a lawleſs mob, by a furious and deſperate rabble. In this I agree with Mr. Paine; and it would be as unjuſt to condemn the nation at large for their exceſſes, as to make a man in a raging fever reſponſible for his actions. The cenſure therefore lies at the door of thoſe who gave theſe bloody hints to a blind and miſguided mob: it affects thoſe who did not make uſe of their power and authority to reſtrain thoſe deeds of horror and atrocity. In this light can we acquit the National Aſſembly? Moſt certainly we cannot; eſpecially when we reflect that a majority of the Houſe rejected the propoſals of Meſſrs. Mounier and Lally-Tollendal, with ſome others, for preſerving the peace of the capital, and preventing in future

ſuch

ſuch acts of violence and blood-ſhed. M. Bornave in particular, the diſciple of M. Mirabeau, had the aſſurance to applaud thoſe exceſſes. "After all," ſaid he, "is the blood "that has been ſpilt of ſuch mighty conſe- "quence?" Mr. Paine remarks that the people (ſpeaking of theſe bloody deeds) learn to copy after their betters. He might have remarked likewiſe that they knew how to profit by their inſtructions.

The motion, which was made for the re-eſtabliſhment of order, for the maintenance of the peace and the ſecurity of the capital, being rejected, ſeveral members quitted the Aſſembly. They acted with proper precaution, for every diſſenting voice was liable to proſcription. He was an *Ariſtocrate*, conſequently an enemy to liberty. To keep up the alarm, which as I obſerved before was the main policy of the Demagogues, M. Mirabeau informed the Houſe, with the moſt ſerious and ſorrowful countenance, that he had reaſon to ſuſpect that gun-powder and other combuſtibles were laid beneath it to blow them all up at once. Search was immediately made, but no diſcovery of the kind enſued. Nevertheleſs theſe reports had alſo their effect. The provinces being alarmed at theſe tales, began

to arm in their own defence, expecting every moment that attacks would be made againſt their newly-acquired liberty, which they were made to believe would be overthrown by the ariſtocratic party. Upon this, they gave unlimited powers to their repreſentatives, who failed not to turn them to their own advantage. From hence, every violent act, every unjuſt meaſure adopted by the Aſſembly, became an act of the nation. The powers which the conſtituents gave to their repreſentatives at the firſt outſet, were very limited, and moderate. They wiſhed indeed for liberty, but it was rational liberty alone they ſought. They had given the moſt poſitive and peremptory order to their repreſentatives to co-operate with the Monarch in every thing in procuring it. They were deputed to form a conſtitution, and ſet ſuch bounds to the powers of the crown, as would preſerve a due equilibrium in the ſtate. As a model, they looked up to this country, though they certainly aimed to improve upon it. Originals are ſuſceptible of improvement, as times and circumſtances alter. But now all theſe moderate views were laid aſide through terror, ſupported by fiction and deceit.

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The Marquis de Favras was another unfortunate object of popular fury. It was reported that he had projected the King's eſcape to Metz; that he had tampered with ſeveral of the National Guards for that effect, and had concerted the aſſaſſination of the principal men of the new adminiſtration. Though no proofs could be brought home to convict him, though the improbability of the facts ſtared in every man's face, and although he was not even permitted to ſpeak in his own defence, nor to produce any witneſs, or witneſſes in his favor, he was condemned, and put to death. To crown the injuſtice of this iniquitous procedure, the ſame perſon who pronounced ſentence of death upon this unfortunate gentleman, added, "Sir, you muſt conſider your "life, as a ſacrifice due to the peace and "tranquility of the public."

The Aſſembly ſat a ſilent ſpectator of theſe acts of injuſtice. They gave out, ſeeing that in fact they did nothing for the good of the ſtate, that their beneficent views were obſtructed by the continual oppoſition of the ariſtocratic party. They paid no attention to the dangerous ſituation of their King, nor even of the nation, had his Majeſty been inclined to oppoſe force to force, and involve

it in a civil war. Fearleſs and regardleſs of all theſe calamities; heedleſs of all the conſequences which might flow from their inattention, they ſtopped the operations of the law, annihilated the magiſtracy, applauded the deſertion of the army, and overthrew all the political force of the kingdom, before they had taken a ſingle ſtep to reſtrain the exceſſes of the people, or to give them any laws in lieu of thoſe they had aboliſhed. The people therefore turned the tables upon their legiſlators in many inſtances, as you will ſee hereafter.

This charge however affects only ſome particulars, who, by the aid of the rabble, had got a majority in the Aſſembly. I ſpeak of a ſet of men, who pride themſelves in particular opinions, oppoſite to the generally received maxims of the world; of a ſet of men, who have ſomething to gain, but nothing to loſe, and thus look upon the misfortunes of their country as a trivial concern, when ballanced in the ſcale of their own ambitious and intereſted views. When I ſpoke of theſe leading men as ſupported by the mob, I ſhould have ſaid that the doors were always thrown open to them, whenever their interference became neceſſary either to ſupport or oppoſe a motion, as circumſtances

cumſtances ſuited. The reverſe is practiſed in this country. No man is admitted, unleſs he be introduced by a member; and when any important and weighty debate enſues, the gallery is cleared, and the company deſired to retire. I now reſume the thread of my ſtory.

M. Mounier, a worthy member of this Aſſembly (whoſe name I ſhall have frequent occaſion to mention) had moved for the eſtabliſhment of two Houſes of Parliament, ſimilar to theſe erected in this country, and that the King ſhould always have a power to diſſent, whenever he judged it expedient, againſt any meaſure which might be propoſed. This motion threw the cabal into a ferment. They threatned thoſe members, who ſhould dare to ſupport it, with their indignation and reſentment. They thundered out their rage through all the provinces, whoſe minds it was neceſſary to poiſon, and whoſe judgments it was their intereſt to miſlead, leaſt they ſhould be inclined to examine too narrowly into the propriety of their own proceedings. In vain was it urged that in England, the King was veſted with this prerogative. In vain did they alledge that this country had two Houſes of Parliament, and nevertheleſs thought itſelf

free,

free. In vain did they contend that when a conſtitution was well guarded, the Prince could never ſucceſsfully encroach upon the liberties of the people. Abbé Seyes, among the foremoſt, replied, "that they did not aſ-
"ſemble to copy after others, but to create a
"new conſtitution; that it was below the dig-
"nity of the French nation to adopt ſuch a
"patched affair as that of England; that what
"might ſuit one country, might not be fitting
"for another; in fine, that it was perſpection
"alone they ſought in the formation of theirs."
Thus ſpoke the patriot. His ſpeech reminds me of Swift's reply to an upſtart genius of the ſame complexion, who took for his motto, *Libertas, et natale volum*, under which the Dean wrote, "fine words! I wonder where he ſtole
"them." I muſt obſerve that this Abbé Seyes was one of the moſt violent opponents of the nobility and ſuperior clergy when their degradation was the ſubject of debate. But no ſooner did the Aſſembly move for the abolition of tythes, than he was as clamorous in his oppoſition. *Cicero pro domô ſuâ.* He combated the motion with the moſt vehement elocution. So true it is, that ſelf-intereſt is the great and ſole ſpring of moſt men's actions.

In

In the Aſſembly at this moment there was nothing but party, faction, and clamour. The moſt dangerous party, or faction was that which was devoted to the D—ke of O—ans. They had openly aſſerted his claim to the crown in caſe of failure in the preſent reigning family. Why was the claim made at this moment? Nobody conteſted it. Let us however proceed, and by combining circumſtances we may be able to form ſome judgment of the matter. We have already ſeen that the bloody trophies of a ſavage mob were ſuſpended before his palace. It is a known fact that he bribed the populace to commit every furious and outrageous act. The public houſes were open to them, and he paid for all. "What need have "we to work," ſaid one fellow to another, "our good father Philip will ſupport us." It is a well known fact likewiſe, that his great aim was to drive the King from Verſailles, and to get himſelf declared Regent or Protector. A few more crimes might place him on the throne. But he was imcompetent to the buſineſs. He he had neither the head to plan, or the heart to execute ſuch ſublime villiany. Our Cromwell he might have poſſibly taken for his model. But Cromwell's ſoul was of a different caſt. Courage and hypo-

criſy,

criſy, with ſanctified and rigid morals, paved the way to his elevation. A diſregard of all decency marks the character of the D— of O——. In private life, he is abandoned to the loweſt degree of debauchery. I ſhall however neither put you to the bluſh, or ſoil my paper with the recital of theſe. We will therefore take a view of him in the upper regions of gallantry. Taking a fancy to the wife of M^{ar.qui's} de S^{illery}——, he aſſailed him in a tender part. This gentleman was in diſtreſſed circumſtances. The D—— offered him his purſe, provided he would yield the lady to his embraces. The bargain was ſtruck. The D—— made her governeſs to his children, (for he always kept cloſe to the old proverb *utile dulci,*) and ſhe was received into his houſe, where his Ducheſs likewiſe reſided. Thus regardleſs of common decency due to his wife, to his character, and to the world, he gave to this lady, known by the name of Madame G^{enlis}——, the tuition and management of his children, as I have juſt ſaid.

It is reported that this woman was the firſt who impreſſed him with ideas of his own importance, and inſinuated the advantages he might derive from the confuſion of the times, if he would but attend to his own intereſt,

ſummon

ſummon up a little courage, and untie his purſe ſtrings, which in ſpite of his immenſe fortune, he had kept carefully cloſed. Trifling incidents often give birth to the greateſt things, particularly where women are concerned. Many inſtances I could adduce in proof of my aſſertion, but ſhall paſs them over, rather than give ſuſpicion of offence to the ladies. As to Madame G——, (as ſhe is according to the cant female phraſe, a *naughty woman)* I may take the liberty to cenſure her; and the more eſpecially as my narrative requires it.

The Queen of France had condeſcended to make her relation a viſit. Madame G—— was in the room, and the lover made her ſit down in the preſence of his Sovereign. The Queen, as well ſhe might, took offence, and the lady, in conſequence of it, was obliged to depart. She vowed revenge however, and what will not a woman do in her reſentment? "*Furens quid fœmina poſſit?*" Like Lady Macbeth ſhe endeavoured to rouſe and animate his ſoul. "Art thou," ſaid ſhe, "afraid to be "the ſame in thine own act and valour, as "thou art in deſire? Would'ſt thou have "that, which thou eſteemeſt the ornament of "life, and live a coward in thine own eſteem?"

Madame B—— (ſhe was with him in London) he alſo decoyed from her huſband. But as his princely diſpoſition would not ſuffer him to eat ſuch prime fruit, without paying for it, he offered to M. B—— to procure him ſuperior rank in the army to that he already enjoyed. This was meant as a compenſation for the injury and inſult offered to that gentleman. What ſtrange ideas of virtue and honor ſome great men have! But Mr. B— was too old-faſhioned to accept the proferred boon; He replied that "the D— had con-"ferred already ſufficient obligations upon him "by ridding him of a faithleſs, and conſe-"quently of a worthleſs wife."

The D——'s courage however did not keep pace with his gallantry. It is a known fact that being in the preſence-chamber at Verſailles on a certain day, an officer who ſtood near his perſon, ſaid, looking him at the ſame time full in the face, "Ce geux, que fait il icy?" in other words, what does that raſcal do here? You may imagine that ſuch a ſalutation was rather grating to his ears. He therefore withdrew to the oppoſite ſide of the room. The officer followed him, and repeated the ſame offenſive words. Upon this the company within hearing began to grin, and he very pru-

dently

dently retired. It was a matter of debate among his party, if he ſhould take notice of the inſult. Upon inveſtigating the ſubject, it was decided in the negative. They not only knew the extent of his courage, but had a greater object in view for him; and to this they bent all their ſtrength.

" He that———and runs away,
" May live to fight another day."

Though I have impeached both his want of decency and courage, I have as yet paid no tribute to his prudence. This would be acting with a partiality I diſdain. Wherefore I beg leave to tell you that on the day he attended the Aſſembly, when his rights and pretenſions to the crown were debated, either through the heat of the place, or the agitation of his mind, he fainted away. Every aſſiſtance, you may imagine, was immediately procured. His neck-cloth taken off, his ſhirt unbottoned, &c. when to their great ſurprize they found his body compleatly guarded by a welted waiſtcoat, otherwiſe a coat of mail. What he had to fear, he himſelf knew beſt. The precaution however was certainly good, and a full proof of his prudence and ſagacity.

It was only in confuſion and riot that he could hope to bring his ſchemes to bear. The

ſureſt method for the purpoſe, as inſinuated to him, was to bring about a real famine, or at leaſt the appearances of it, which would not fail to rouſe the mob, as it always ſerves for a pretext for popular commotions. Though the foregoing harveſt had been unproductive, yet by the prudent attention of the magiſtrates that dreadful calamity had been well guarded againſt, and it was proved, that Paris had never been more plentifully ſupplied. This, I ſay, was proved after the ſtricteſt enquiry had been made. It is ſaid that application was made to this country for a ſupply. It may be ſo, yet it does not prove that they were in utter diſtreſs for that neceſſary commodity. They might want it, as we did, both for the quality and the quantity, for our harveſt was equally bad as theirs; and it is provident to keep up the ſtock, for fear of a ſubſequent bad ſeaſon. But the fact is, *they did not want it*, in any other ſenſe. It was not a want of abſolute neceſſity. I prove it thus. At Lille, for example, there was always a ſufficient ſupply. Bread indeed was a little dearer than uſual; and ſo was our's. If then there was no famine at Lille, there could be none in Paris, and upon that I might reſt my argument. But what will not villainy, aided by ingenuity, do? Above two

thouſand

thouſand ſacks of flower, it was well known, were thrown into the river Seine at one time. Indeed it was given out, when this infernal tranſaction was detected, that the corn was damaged, and unfit for uſe. But, by the moſt creditable report, it was declared to be the reverſe.

Another incident occurred which gave the faction a further opportunity of working upon the paſſions of the people with the ſame ſucceſs. I ſhall relate it in Mr. Paine's words. "The *Gardes du Corps* (in other words the "King's body-guards) which was compoſed, "as ſuch regiments generally are, of perſons "much connected with the court, gave an en-"tertainment at Verſailles (October 1.) to ſome "foreign regiments, and when the entertain-"ment was at the height, on a ſignal given, the "*Gardes du Corps* tore the national cockade "from their hats, trampled it under foot, and "replaced it with a counter-cockade prepared "for the purpoſe." There are a few prominent features in this buſineſs, which may lead us to ſome tolerable knowledge of the truth, obſcured as it ſeems to be by the contradictory aſſertions of each party. All the troops aſſembled at Verſailles did not amount to ten thouſand men. What had Paris, or the faction

tion to fear, who could muſter fifty thouſand? The entertainment given by the *Garde du Corps* was no novelty. Such entertainments were uſually, if not always given, as a compliment, upon the arrival of every regiment. This was given to the regiment of Flanders. The militia-regiments obſerved the ſame cuſtom without ſuſpicion of offence. The officers of the *Gardes du Corps*, as well as the other regular troops, had never worn the national cockade, and therefore could not have torn it from their hats to replace it with a counter-cockade, as Mr. Paine aſſerts. To make any thing of his ſtory, we muſt ſuppoſe that they tore the cockades from the hats of the militia-officers, who were alſo invited to this entertainment. But would they have patiently ſuffered ſuch an indignity? Would M. D'Eſtaing, one of the gueſts, who commanded that corps, have brooked ſuch pointed inſolence? Did he, or did they ever exhibit any complaint of the kind againſt the *Gardes du Corps?* The Aſſembly and the faction have been repeatedly called upon to prove the charge. If true, why did not they produce their evidence? What had they to fear? Informers were numerous, cordially received, and deemed a virtuous and deſerving people, particularly when they

they impeached any of the royal party. They liſtened with avidity to the charge brought againſt the *Gardes du Corps*, which one of the members denounced with all the vehemence of paſſionate declamation. He demanded juſtice for the outrages and indignities thrown upon the *auguſt majeſty of the nation* by the inſult to the patriotic cockade, which they had adopted. A certain M. Pethion, who was preſent, requeſted the honorable member to give the charge in writing, and to ſet his name to it. He heſitated, and ſeemed confounded. Upon which M. Mirabeau, to relieve his friend from his embarraſſment, dexterouſly turned the diſcourſe. The Committee, who had liſtened to this charge, perceiving that the tale would not take ſo well as they had wiſhed, immediately forged another. This was the ſecret ſcheme which the *Gardes du Corps* had formed to eſcort the King to Metz. But in this they were likewiſe unfortunate, for the pretended diſcovery of this plot was only made on the 8th of October, and to prevent the execution of it, they ſeized him at Verſailles, and brought him to Paris on the ſixth. They attempted, as you will preſently ſee, to maſſacre the *Gardes du Corps* on the fifth and ſixth of October, when their ſuppoſed delinquency

quency was only diſcovered on the eighth day of that month. Indeed ſome of the news-papers, to palliate the blunder that was made by their aſſociates in iniquity, gave out (for the people will ſwallow any thing) that the Committee was endowed with the ſpirit of prophecy. They foreſaw what would happen, and therefore by *mere inſtinct* ſaved the nation from deſtruction.

It appears that the Queen was the greateſt object of their jealouſy. She was ſuppoſed to be the adviſer of the King in all his meaſures. She was therefore hated, deteſted, feared, ridiculed and lampooned. The infamous motion, which M. Mirabeau made in the Houſe, ſeemed pointedly levelled at her. "I propoſe, ſaid he, that it be enacted that every "individual of this nation, excepting the King, "be deemed a ſubject." M. Mounier, the preſident, was alarmed, as well as many other members, at this violent motion, which came unexpectedly upon them, and he immediately turned the attention of the Houſe to another object. For had ſuch a decree paſſed the Houſe, it would not have been deemed unlawful to cut off the Queen or any of the Royal Family, had they thought it neceſſary for their purpoſes. The people are apt ſcholars in all

that

that is cruel or miſchievous. Mr. Paine allows that they readily take hints from their betters. In confirmation of this point, I muſt tell you that four aſſaſſins, habited like women, ſtopped on the fatal fifth of October at a public houſe to drink. One of them addreſſed his comrades thus. "By G—— I cannot pre-"vail upon myſelf to kill him. That is not "juſt. But as to her, with all my heart." To which another replied in the true black-guard ſtile. The "devil take the hindmoſt, when "once we are engaged." Two very creditable witneſſes ſwore to this ruffian diſcourſe, to which however no attention was paid. But to return to the *Gardes du Corps*.

The fact is that the Aſſembly, or rather the predominant faction in it, was jealous of the attachment which that body of men retained for their King. Their loyalty was a pointed ſatire and conſtant reproach to them, as contraſted with their behaviour. Too frequently do men reprobate the actions of thoſe who do right, becauſe they themſelves do wrong. However this unfortunate entertainment afforded a pretext for calumny, and calumny ſoon brought on riot, confuſion and bloodſhed.

The proſcription, and conſequently the flight of ſo many rich and noble families from

the capital, had greatly diminiſhed its trade and commerce. The ſhops were without cuſtomers, and the manufacturers without work. To repair this loſs, it was ſuggeſted that if the King and Royal Family were compelled to make Paris their reſidence, the evil under which the people now laboured, would be done away. To forward this ſcheme, it was induſtriouſly reported that the *Gardes du Corps* had it in contemplation to carry the King off to Metz, as I have ſaid, there to erect his ſtandard, ſummon all his ſubjects upon their allegiance to attend him, and this to trample upon the liberties of the people. This report has been ſo confidently aſſerted, and particularly ſo by two gentlemen of my acquaintance, who kept up a regular correſpondence with Paris, that I have been almoſt induced to believe it, was not my aſſent withdrawn for the following conſiderations.

It was undoubtedly the policy and the drift of the D— of O—— to drive the King from Verſailles, becauſe when once his Majeſty had deſerted his poſt, the faction would in all probability have declared the throne vacant, and nominated him Regent or Protector of the realm. If ſuch was not his view, wherefore was he ſo buſy on the fifth of October, on that very

very day, ſo diſgraceful to the French nation in the eyes of all Europe? His heart, as I have obſerved, was not formed for the dangers of ſuch a day. Yet he expoſed his perſon in the midſt of riot, bloodſhed and confuſion. Beſides, how could the King ſuppoſe that a body of 500 men, which was the complement of the *Gardes du Corps* at that moment, could poſſibly cover his retreat, which was ſure to be obſtructed by the national militia, and all the armed municipalities, through which he would be obliged to paſs? Allowing however that the King had formed the intention of withdrawing himſelf, in ſpite of theſe obſtacles, let me aſk: Was he not warranted ſo to do by the alarming temper of the times, and in particular by the indignities which he had ſo lately received from the Pariſians? But to me it appears moſt probable that he had no ſuch deſign. He plainly ſaw through the thin diſguiſe of the D— of O——, and he was reſolved to avoid the ſnare. To his ambitious projects the King was no ſtranger. He had the fate of our James II. before his eyes. From his falſe policy, he derived knowledge, and therefore thwarted the borrowed ſchemes of a ſecond Prince of Orange.

When the decree intitled the *declaration of rights* was preſented to the King for his ſanction, the Council, which he had ſummoned upon the occaſion, demurred. They halted upon the brink of the precipice, for in fact to aſſent to this decree, was to exclude himſelf from all ſovereignty. They therefore gave for anſwer, that his Majeſty would ſoon make his ſentiments known. This delay only ſerved to increaſe the flame, and to accelerate the horrid views of the different parties. The O—— faction, whoſe induſtry never ſlept, turned this irreſolution of the King to their own advantage. The moſt odious comments were made upon it, and theſe did not fail to have the deſired effect, that of raiſing the mob. Money was thrown among them with a profuſe hand; and they in return huzzaed *Philip for ever*. In this motely groupe of impurity were four or five hundred fiſh-women, who, if poſſible, were more blaſted and depraved than their vile aſſociates. At this moment however M. de la Fayette, the Commandant-General of the militia appeared. The people immediately addreſſed him in a clamorous manner, and ordered him to repair to Verſailles, and compel the King and Royal Family to return to Paris, and in future to make

it

it their reſidence. The General * heſitated. He endeavoured to harangue, and appeaſe them, if poſſible. For only anſwer, they pointed to the fatal lanthern-poſt, on which ſo many had already been ſuſpended. Irreſolute and fearful what to do (for now the mob gave him the law) he repaired to the Town-houſe, where a Committee, compoſed ſcarcely of twenty perſons, was then ſitting. By theſe, equally terrified with himſelf, at the inſurrection, he was commanded to ſet off for Verſailles, "ſuch being the will of the people." Thus ſanctioned by law, he bowed obedience, and ſoon after ſet off on his expedition with more than twenty thouſand men and thirty pieces of cannon.

Let me here obſerve that the democratic party in France have affected to compare M. de la Fayette with the American General. I ſhould ſuppoſe however that Mr. Waſhington would not be over proud of the compariſon. He, it is true, aſſerted the liberty of his country, fought for it, and ſucceeded. But his conduct was never marked with the leaſt duplicity or hypocriſy; never did he ſubmit to be the tool of a lawleſs rabble. What had

* By the moſt diſcerning people, he has been long thought to be an equivocal character.

the

the French General to fear? Was he not at the head of his army? If any miſcreant had attempted his life, would not ten thouſand arms have been lifted up to ward the blow? Was the corps, which he commanded, ſo daſtardly that they would have ſuffered their General to be aſſaſſinated in their ſight? Let the General anſwer theſe queries: Either the militia of Paris, which he commanded, was but a gang of cut-throats, which he could not depend upon, or his conduct was cowardly to a degree. Let him now chuſe which ſide of the argument he pleaſes. His courage indeed, notwithſtanding the brilliant panegyric, which Mr. Paine has ſo liberally beſtowed upon him, has not received the ſame tribute of praiſe from thoſe who knew him in America. He ſent a challenge, it is true, to Lord Carliſle, when he perfectly knew that it would not be accepted, becauſe his Lordſhip (as he aſſerted) had ſpoken diſreſpectfully of the King of France. What a fund of loyalty at that moment! I ſuppoſe he then thought as the late King of Pruſſia, who had uſed to ſay that the moſt pleaſing dream a Prince could poſſibly have would be to ſuppoſe himſelf King of France. Was that monarch now alive, would he not exclaim *Quantum mutatus ab illo?*

The

The mob, after having plundered the Town-Houſe, and procured five pieces of cannon, obliged every perſon they met with on the road to proceed with them to Verſailles. This dreadful and motely phalanx, compoſed of men, women, and men in the diſguiſe of women, all drained from the ſcum and ſinks of Paris, arrived at the place of action about four o'clock in the afternoon. The King was then at Meudon, one of his country-houſes, at a ſmall diſtance from Verſailles; for at that alarming period of anarchy and confuſion he did not think it adviſable to go far from his uſual reſidence, having frequently had ocular demonſtration of the uſe which his *good* ſubjects made of the *rights of men.* On the morning he had ſent his anſwer to the *Declaration of Rights,* which I mentioned juſt before: but as it was not explicit, and conſequently not conformable to their expectations, it threw the demagogues into a fury. The moſt indecent and paſſionate reſolutions were propoſed; and, I believe, it was then M. Mirabeau made the motion I have already mentioned, which ſeemed levelled at the Queen, if not at the royal family in general.

What muſt have been the feelings of the king on his return, apprized, as he muſt have been,

been, of the violence of the Aſſembly, and the appearance of ſuch a tremendous mob, you poſſibly may better conceive than I am able to deſcribe. The fiſh-women, in the firſt inſtance, repaired to the houſe where the members were ſitting. They were for forcing their way thro' the centinels who guarded the doors, and breaking them open. The Aſſembly therefore deemed it more prudent to ſave them that trouble, and ordered the doors to be thrown open. The room, you may imagine, was ſoon filled by the multitude, who without any ceremony placed themſelves promiſcuouſly, or, as we ſay, cheek by jole with the members. A chief among this black-guard murderous crew began to harangue them. He ſaid that "the good citizens of Paris "came to demand bread, and the immediate "puniſhment of the *Gardes du Corps* for the "inſult offered to the National Cockade." The Preſident endeavoured to ſoothe and pacify them with mild and ſoft language, but his voice was quickly drowned by the grinding of the carriage-wheels on which the cannon were placed, and which they were going to plant round the houſe, as alſo by the inceſſant roaring and ſhouting of the mob without doors. Thus we ſee that the Aſſembly which

had

had made hitherto ſo free with the royal authority, was in its turn treated with as little reſpect, and obliged to yield to a vile rabble, headed by a parcel of fiſh-women. Though many of the members, as not being in the ſecret, might tremble at this awful appearance of things, yet there were others who beheld the alarming confuſion with a ſteady and ſerene countenance. Among theſe were M. Mirabeau, whoſe lack of courage could only be eclipſed by the D— of O—, who alſo (as I have remarked) was in the midſt of the mob. Mirabeau alone ſtepped forward, and boldly interrogated the rabble, how they dared to treat the Aſſembly of the Nation with ſuch indignity and inſolence? Inſtead of reſenting this lofty language, as they moſt aſſuredly would have done, had any of the royal party dared to harangue them in the ſame manner, they exhibited no ſymptom of diſpleaſure. Indeed they could not command their riſible muſcles with the ſame facility they did their tongues, for they were ſeen to grin *horribly* at the farce.

Give me leave to ſay a few words of this M. Mirabeau. By birth he was a Nobleman, and as ſuch offered his ſervices to that order as one of their repreſentatives in the Aſſembly. His character being objected to, his

ſervices were of courſe rejected. He therefore purchaſed a hoſier's ſhop, and wrote over the door, *Mirabeau, Dealer in Stockings, Ribbons, &c.* Thus ſelf-degraded, he ſunk into the Commons, and procured a ſeat to repreſent that body. He was a man of great talents, ſuperior eloquence, and monſtrous vices. In fine, he was formed by nature, as Shakeſpear ſays, for *treaſons, ſtratagems and ſpoils.* His patriotiſm was a farce: for after all his declamation, all his attempts to overthrow the royal authority, he courted its influence; and had it not been for a decree of the Aſſembly, which declared every member of the legiſlative body incapable for ever of holding any place, or penſion under government, he would have ſold himſelf to the court-party, not doubting but they would purchaſe his intereſt at any price. This decree of the Aſſembly made him, if poſſible, a greater enemy than ever to the King. Intereſt alone (for he was a ruined man) being the main ſpring which gave force and elaſticity to all his actions. He is now dead, and peace be to his manes.

Whilſt he was haranguing the mob, the *Gardes du Corps* were attacked. They, as well as the regiment of Flanders, were under arms, but

but had received poſitive orders not to fire. This proves to demonſtration that there were traitors even in the King's Council; for had they been permitted to retaliate, ſuch diſciplined troops would have been an over-match for the raw militia, and confuſed rabble. If they did not mean that they ſhould act, why were they ordered to form? why were they ſent upon duty? The King indeed was informed, that if they were ſuffered to repel force by force, himſelf, and probably all his family would periſh in the conflict. Wherefore theſe barbarous orders were iſſued, and to which the *Gardes du Corps* rigidly conformed, and ſuffered themſelves to be inſulted, wounded, and even many of them killed, rather than diſobey the order. The regiment of Flanders was not ſo paſſive. They did not chuſe to become victims to ſuch rigid military diſcipline. They called aloud for orders to fire. Theſe being refuſed, they tore their cockades from their hats, replaced them with thoſe of the nation, and joined the popular party.

The Preſident of the Aſſembly, having received his orders from the mob, waited upon the King to lay their grievances before him. His Majeſty, as little ſuſpecting as the Preſident, that upwards of thirty waggons laden

with bread, meat, and ſpirituous liquors, had attended the proceſſion from Paris, or that the famine they complained of was the production of craft and artifice, and not owing to any real deficiency; I ſay, his Majeſty little ſuſpecting all this, moſt pathetically lamented the miſeries of the people. He aſſured them, through the Preſident, that he would repeat his orders to have the capital well ſupplied with grain, and that he himſelf would ſee that his orders were punctually and immediately executed. The Preſident was alſo obliged at this moment to preſent to his Majeſty again the *Declaration of Rights*, requeſting his aſſent without any modification or reſtriction whatever. The King ſigned it, and thus gave up every thing; for what power can a man be ſaid to have, who is only to execute the will of another? The Preſident has been much cenſured for his conduct upon this occaſion. He protracted however the evil deed as long as he poſſibly could, for he did not preſent it to the King till after ten o'clock at night. Moreover, the mob now gave the law, and what could the Preſident do? He ſuppoſed his compliance would appeaſe them. The King, as I have already ſaid, aſſented to the Bill. This was not a time to demur,

much

much leſs to refuſe. The Council indeed ſought to protract the buſineſs a little, that the Queen and Dauphin might withdraw, and ſecure themſelves from the dangers which ſurrounded them on all ſides. Her Majeſty, when ſhe was apprized of their intention, and her immediate departure urged as an abſolute neceſſity, nobly and courageouſly declared that ſhe would ſooner part with her life, than leave the King in the hour of diſtreſs, and in the dreadful and alarming ſituation of the preſent moment. "As for death," ſaid ſhe, "I "fear it not—I have learnt from the Empreſs, "my mother, to value life as nothing, when "duty interferes." No intreaties therefore could prevail upon this Princeſs to depart, although ſhe knew that ſhe was the main object marked for deſtruction. In this you will find ſhe was not deceived, although preſerved from ruffian hands by the ſpecial interpoſition of Providence.

The Gardes du Corps, after having been ſo mal-treated, were at laſt ordered to retire from their poſt. They did ſo; but were fired at by the militia of Verſailles, who killed ſome of their horſes, and wounded ſeveral of their men. They proceeded however in tolerably good order, without attempting the leaſt reprisal.

priſal. They were then ſtationed in one of the courts of the palace. All was now uproar and confuſion in the extreme. The mob had moved the cannon from the houſe of the Aſſembly, and placed it oppoſite the court where the *Gardes du Corps* were poſted. The King, to ſave them from deſtruction, and if poſſible to appeaſe the people, ordered them to retire to Ramboillet, about 30 miles from Verſailles, except thoſe who had been wounded, and a few who did duty in various parts of the palace. Alarmed, as well he might be, at the preſent poſture of affairs, he deſired the attendance of the Aſſembly to aid him with their counſels. Before the Preſident appeared, M. de la Fayette arrived at the head of his army. On this ſudden turn of affairs, the King, addreſſing himſelf to the former, ſaid, "Sir, I wiſhed at this alarming moment to be "ſurrounded by the Repreſentatives of the "Nation, and to requeſt their advice. As "things are however, I have nothing more to "ſay than that I never had the leaſt intention "to go to Metz *." This ſpeech carries with it a great air of myſtery. His Majeſty ſeems to have been over-awed by M. de la Fayette.

* In other words, of deſerting his poſt.

However,

However, the Pariſian General gave him ſuch aſſurances of his perſonal ſafety, that poſſibly he might think it uſeleſs to adviſe with the Aſſembly. Be it as it may, the King was certainly in a lamentable ſituation. Obliged, as he was, to depend for the ſecurity of himſelf and family upon a man who had erected the ſtandard of rebellion againſt him; on a man, who was at that moment at the head of a rebel army, and who was, in a manner, the maſter of himſelf and his family; on this man, I ſay, he was obliged to depend for perſonal ſafety, at the ſame time that he was compelled to diſcard the only faithful ſervants (the *Gardes du Corps*) who had remained inviolably attached to him. I ſaid above that the conduct of M. de la Fayette appears very myſterious. You will poſſibly think ſo likewiſe, and that his profeſſions of ſervice towards the King and royal family were, if not abſolutely inſincere, very equivocal, when I come to relate the ſequel of this horid tale.

The Preſident would not ſuffer the Aſſembly to adjourn, though preſſed to it by ſeveral of the members, and particularly by M. Mirabeau, who doubtleſs (at ſuch a critical moment) had buſineſs elſewhere. He very wiſely conceived that if he could keep them together,

gether, it might be the means of reſtraining the exceſſes of the people, who poſſibly might retain ſome little reſpect for the Repreſentatives of the Nation. But he was miſtaken; for the mob roared and thundered in their ears, "Have done with your long ſpeeches—"Give us bread." Upon this the Preſident propoſed to ſend to all the bakers for bread, little ſuſpecting that a peculiar providence had already provided for them. In a moment the doors of the Aſſembly-room were thrown open, the proviſions which had been conveyed in the thirty waggons unloaded, and they began to carouze. Thus was the temple of liberty profaned, and became the ſeat of gluttony and drunkenneſs.

About three o'clock in the morning, M. de la Fayette quitted the palace, having aſſured the King that he would anſwer for the perfect tranquility of every thing. His next ſtep was to propoſe to the Preſident to adjourn the Aſſembly, aſſuring him that he had taken every neceſſary precaution to keep order. He ſaid that it was high time for all parties to take a little repoſe after ſuch a day of trouble and confuſion; that he himſelf was ſo well perſuaded that every thing would remain quiet and peaceable, that he was reſolved.

ved to go to bed. Upon theſe poſitive aſſurances, M. Mounier, the Preſident, adjourned the Aſſembly, and appointed the members to meet at eleven o'clock.

Theſe proceedings of the General have undoubtedly a very extraordinary appearance. They prove either his ignorance or his treachery. His ignorance, if he could ſuppoſe that ſuch an immenſe rabble, in a great meaſure in a ſtate of intoxication, would be guilty of no exceſs, after the many dreadful inſtances they had already given of it. If he had foreſeen what would happen, (and I believe it will be no raſh judgment from the premiſes to conclude that he did) he acted a moſt treacherous, infamous, and unworthy part.

Whilſt he and the members were conſigned to the arms of ſleep, or at leaſt when the former was ſuppoſed to be ſo, a detachment of five hundred of the militia preſented themſelves before the guard-room of the *Gardes du Corps*, in which place there remained only a few of thoſe who had been wounded and diſabled in the attack which had been made upon them a few hours before; and for the purpoſes of duty, as I remarked above, were alſo left the neceſſary complement. The officer who commanded at the guard-room, ſup-

poſing that this detachment came with the intention of attacking them again, immediately put himſelf and his men in a poſture of defence, being reſolved to ſell their lives as dear as poſſible. The militia perceiving the determined reſolution of theſe brave men, requeſted a parley. One of them, who ſpoke in the name of the body, declared that they came with no hoſtile intentions: all they required were the rights of hoſpitality, and ſhelter from the heavy rain, which was then falling. Upon this aſſurance they were admitted into the guard-room, and treated with the utmoſt attention and civility. Scarcely however had the day began to dawn, than they ſeized upon their generous and credulous hoſts, and diſarmed them. They were then conducted to the parade, where an executioner ſtood ready for the purpoſe of ſacrificing ſuch objects as were delivered over to him. He was dreſſed in a moſt extraordinary manner, and exhibited a very groteſque figure. He had a cap upon his head of an enormous ſize, with a long beard which hung below his breaſt; and a tremendous naked axe, which he held in his hand. After having diſpatched ſome of theſe unfortunate victims, and whilſt they were debating in what manner they

ſhould

ſhould diſpoſe of the reſt, another detachment of theſe abandoned wretches broke into the courts of the palace, maſſacred the foremaſt ſentinels, and laying hold of one of them, dragged him under the windows of the King's apartment, and ſtruck off his head. From thence they broke into the apartments of the Queen, after having killed or left for dead the ſentinels who did duty there. Their repeated cries of *Madam, Madam, ſave yourſelf*, awoke that unfortunate Princeſs. She had only ſufficient time to jump out of bed, and run in that condition into the King's apartment by a back-ſtaircaſe, another door which led to the long-gallery, which ſhe had tried, being bolted. Such were the precautions of the faction! And indeed it has been whiſpered abroad, with an air of great probability, that there were ſome men of better note engaged in this horrid traſaction than might have been expected. The Queen had no ſooner eſcaped from this bed of danger, than the aſſaſſins broke into the room, and pierced through the bedding with their bayonets in hopes of perpetrating their horrid intentions on that unfortunate Princeſs: but they were deceived, Providence having procured the means to effect her eſcape. Furious at their diſappoint-

ment, they repaired to the King's apartment: what they propoſed to do there, no one can tell; for at that moment M. de la Fayette arrived with a company of the militia-grenadiers.

It may rather ſurpriſe you, as it muſt moſt people, that the Pariſian General, whom it was ſuppoſed was ſafe in bed, if not aſleep, ſhould appear at this very critical moment. Aſhamed poſſibly of his ſcandalous conduct for the laſt twenty-four hours, and terrified at the dreadful conſequences of his own pretended ſecurity, he judged it prudent to interpoſe. In conſequence of this, he harangued the people with vehemence and energy. His ſpeech made ſome impreſſion, and in a few revived the latent ſparks of honor and compaſſion. The King crying aloud for mercy towards the miſerable remnant of the *Gardes du Corps*, whom theſe miſcreants were about to diſpatch, ſeveral of the militia grenadiers haſtened to the parade, and reſcued thoſe unfortunate victims from their hands. Among theſe were two officers of rank, whoſe heads, grown grey with age and long ſervice, they were going to ſever from their bodies. Juſt before the fatal ſtroke was to be given, they addreſſed the people in the following manner:

"You

"You may ſhorten our days, but at leaſt we "have this comfortable reflection to ſupport "us, that we ſhall die with our characters un-"ſullied."

The King appeared ſoon after at a balcony of the palace, and with him the Queen and children. No ſooner did the populace perceive the latter, than they cried out, *No children. No children. The King to Paris.* His Majeſty, being now in no condition to refuſe, with a good grace promiſed to comply. He immediately ſent for the Preſident of the Aſſembly, and deſired again that the members might attend him, as he wiſhed to adviſe with them on the preſent melancholy ſtate of affairs. Several of the members immediately agreed to conform to the King's requeſt; but they were over-ruled by M. Mirabeau, who ſaid that it was below the dignity of the legiſlative body of the French nation to wait upon the King: beſides, ſhould they condeſcend to do it, their deliberations within the palace-walls might be ſuſpected without doors. All the remonſtrances of M. Mounier, the Preſident, to prove the fallacy of M. Mirabeau's arguments were of no avail. It was to no purpoſe he aſſerted that the dignity of the Aſſembly conſiſted in doing their duty; as ſuch they were indiſ-

indiſpenſably bound to aſſiſt their King under the preſſure of ſuch difficulties; that it was ridiculous to ſuppoſe that kings, when their palaces were ſwimming in blood, could be able to controul their deliberations. Theſe and many other arguments, which this good man made uſe of, though in themſelves unanſwerable, were nevertheleſs negatived by the majority.

This, I am convinced, will appear to you one of the moſt capital faults which the National Aſſembly has been guilty of. Had they agreed to ſatisfy his Majeſty's requeſt, they would in ſome meaſure have wiped off the ſuſpicion which they lay under, of being accomplices in the exceſſes of the mob, and thoſe of the militia. Poſſibly, had they done this, people by this time might have forgot that they took no ſtep towards the ſuppreſſing theſe outrages; no meaſures for preſerving peace and order. At laſt they became conſcious of theſe capital omiſſions. Their work being compleated, they had leiſure for reflection. They became terrified at the increaſing outrages of the mob. Fear had ſeized all their faculties. In a moment they themſelves might become victims to the evil ſpirit which they had conjured up and ſupported. Even

M. Necker

M. Necker forgot the power, which he once enjoyed over the people. He gave himſelf up to tears without making the leaſt effort to gain the Pariſians, who heretofore looked upon him as their ſaviour, and the tutelar angel of the nation. This * weakneſs, or call it what you pleaſe, in the Miniſter, will be for ever thrown in his teeth, as often as ever his name is recorded in hiſtory. It is impoſſible to ſay that he could have ſucceeded. Had it been otherwiſe, at leaſt he would have had the merit of having attempted it. But, as I ſaid, fear and terror had made ſuch impreſſions on the Aſſembly, except among the few who were privy to the real ſecret, that M. Necker

* Another ſymptom of weakneſs he exhibited by adviſing the King to admit a double repreſentation of the people in the Aſſembly. He ſoon however perceived his miſtake, and wiſhed in ſome meaſure to remedy what was now paſt a cure; for the people, having got all the power in their own hands, were not ſo ready to ſurrender it. In hopes however of applying a remedy, he ſilently ſided with thoſe who voted for the prerogative in the King, to aſſent or diſſent to any bill which paſſed the Houſe. But when he found the motion ſo unpopular, courtier like, he ſuffered himſelf to be carried down the ſtream. This accident (among others) proves that M. Necker never meant to carry things to the ſhameful pitch they are now arrived at.

is not more culpable than the reſt for having yielded to them.

Every thing being now prepared for his Majeſty's departure from Verſailles to Paris, it was decided that the ſaid bloody characters, which hitherto had marked the triumphant proweſs of the people over their king, ſhould be diſplayed in the mournful proceſſion, which was now going to take place. On each ſide of the King's coach were marſhalled the remnant of his *Gardes du Corps*. Without arms, their hair diſhevelled, covered with duſt, ſweat, and wounds; fainting under the fatigues and apprehenſions of the preceding conflict, they were ordered to march on foot. Before the carriage were carried upon long poles two of the heads of their unfortunate comrades, preceded by the executioner, above mentioned, ſmeared all over his face, breaſt, and hands with human gore. The Queen was in a ſeparate carriage. I only mention this to ſay that the mob had ſtopped it ſeveral times; opened the doors, and inſulted her in the groſſeſt manner. An immenſe mob, as you may imagine, attended this woeful proceſſion of degraded majeſty, huzzaing and roaring like the war-hoop of the wild Indians; and that the whole might be as galling and mortifying as

poſſible

poſſible to the unfortunate objects of their proud exultation, it moved with a moſt ſolemn pace. The rear was brought up by the cannon, and thus it paraded to Paris. It may be remarked that the order of this diſmal proceſſion was planned by no ordinary head. There was too much regularity in it, if I may uſe that word, to have been the effect of chance, or even to have been projected in haſte. Poſterity undoubtedly, as well as the preſent generation, will be as much ſurpriſed when they reflect that theſe horrid ſcenes were exhibited by a nation, which has always been deemed polite, humane, and inviolably attached to their Sovereigns; by a people who have been always ſo infatuated with their own conſequence and ſuperior merit, as to deem the reſt of the world (like the ancient Romans) barbarous. *Barbare* was too frequently uſed heretofore by moſt Frenchmen as a word of contempt, when they ſpoke of foreigners, I leave you now to judge where the epithet might be moſt properly applied at this moment.

Permit me to repeat what I remarked before. There were ſeveral parties or factions in the Aſſembly. You have obſerved the end which the D—— of O—— propoſed to him-

ſelf by conjuring up this laſt ſtorm. But ſucceſs did not attend the project. It is more than poſſible M. de La Fayette might fear he would prove ſucceſsful, and thus may be explained, the ſudden appearance of the Pariſian general, when the aſſaſſins broke into the palace. He had reſerved to himſelf the honor of making the King a priſoner, and therefore prevented the execution of a ſimilar ſcheme which the Marquis de St. Hereaguer had attempted ſome time before, as I have already noticed.

The D—— of O—— was now in a very critical ſituation, for M. de la Fayette was privy to his projects, and might impeach to make ſome amends for his own evil deeds. Wherefore the King, to ſave his relation from the conſequences of an inquiry into his conduct, obtained a paſs-port of the National Aſſembly; and under pretence of a ſpecial commiſſion to the Court of London, reſcued him from diſgrace. Here he remained, till by his pecuniary ſacrifices and baſe ſubmiſſions he bought his peace of the Aſſembly, and was permitted to return. *

No

* It has been far from my intention to calumniate this great perſonage, if ſuch I may call him. His character

is

No ſooner did the King reach Paris, than the famine ceaſed. This appeared ſo evident, that the people jeſtingly ſaid that they had brought the baker, his wife, and apprentice into the city, meaning the King, Queen, and the Dauphin. This vile ſcheme having had its due effect, the impoſition was no longer neceſſary. The next object of their care was to preſerve that authority which they had uſurped, for now the *veſſel of ſtate was ſailing with more rapidity than ever*, as they aſſerted. The provinces however might rebel, and call them to an account for their conduct towards the King. Other powers might arm in defence of injured and degraded majeſty. They might make it a common cauſe, and thus would the faction loſe the fruits of their labours. However they had the King in their hands, and he would ſerve as a compleat barrier, or rather a hoſtage againſt all attempts both within and without. It has always been the policy of inſurgents, and in particular of the French nation, to ſecure their King for that very ſame purpoſe. The Hugonets attempted it at

is ſo well known, and the tranſactions, which I have noticed, are poſitively aſſerted by numberleſs writers, uncontradicted by any, that the tale can only be novel to thoſe who have been ignorant of the events.

Amboiſe upon Francis II. and at Meaux upon Charles IX. Theſe however did not ſucceed ſo well as the preſent faction have done, who, to make the beſt of their miſerable hoſtage, forced him to declare that he went to reſide in Paris of his *own accord*; that being *free* to go where ever he pleaſed, he had *choſen* that city for the place of his reſidence. Who could reproach them after ſuch a declaration? Did he not declare that he went to Paris of his own *free will?* Did they not, in conjunction with the Monarch, labour for the good of the nation? Did he not aſſent *freely* to their decrees, ſeeing that he himſelf was *free?* It however may be aſked, *en paſſant*, if he was *free to go wherever he pleaſed*, how they came lately to ſtop him, as he was going to St. Cloud for the benefit of a little country air? How it happened that they forced him to return to his reſidence, I had almoſt ſaid to his priſon, in Paris? I now proceed. This ſophiſtry of the faction threw duſt in the eyes of the people. It was all they wanted; for what is a king without them? It precluded all reflection, and left them in the peaceable enjoyment of their uſurpation. Another motive likewiſe contributed towards it. If any attempt was made for his emancipation, he would

would undoubtedly have been the victim of it. It muſt have created in ſome degree a civil war, which the faction would no doubt have imputed to his intrigues; and, like our Charles I. have made him anſwerable for. Among many other reaſons for my aſſertion, I ſhall trouble you only with the following. It was debated at the club of the *Jacobins*, which is known greatly to influence, if not totally to give the law to the Aſſembly, *whether a king is amenable to public* * *juſtice?* Soon after which, a Member of the National Aſſembly, commenting largely upon the unfortunate cataſtrophe of King Charles I. Another member (Mr. Briſſot) among many other violent remarks, replied that "the Engliſh Parliament "ſhewed itſelf guided by the true ſpirit of "patriotiſm when it aboliſhed a tyranical "monarch. He deſerved the moſt rigorous "puniſhment, and brought down upon his "devoted head, the juſt vengeance of earth "and heaven." (inſerted in the Argus Nov. 3. 1790.) As I ſaid, this conſideration muſt hitherto have prevented attempts to reſcue the king and the nation from thraldom. It is impoſſible, upon any other grounds, to account

* If I recollect right, it was carried in the affirmative.

for

for the inactivity of ſo many princes of the blood, of ſo many of the firſt and nobleſt families of France, who have been deprived of their honors, dignities, and patrimony, and forced into a kind of voluntary exile. It is an example without precedent.

Here I might diſmiſs the ſubject, did I not wiſh to make a few remarks concerning their treatment of the clergy, whom by a ſpecies of contradiction, they have excluded from the *rights of men.* The national debt, and the want of credit, added to M. Necker's declaration that he could not make good his engagements for the lequidation of it, were the ſpecious cauſes of their ruin. The Archbiſhop of Aix, in the name of the clergy, offered four hundred, and afterwards ſix hundred millions of livres for the purpoſe. It was of no avail. Why? becauſe there is not a doubt but a great party, if not the greateſt, wiſhed to aboliſh all * religion from the land, and nothing could do it more efficaciouſly than the degradation and annihilation of the clergy.

* Wiſe legiſlatures! Plutarch will tell them "that a "city might ſooner be built without any ground to fix it "upon, than a commonwealth be conſtituted without "religion."

Where

When a motion was made, whether the ancient religion ſhould be the one eſtabliſhed by law, it was only to feel the pulſe of the nation, and try if they could be prevailed upon to diſcard it totally. The mode of religion to the Aſſembly in general was very indifrent. The publications of Voltaire, Rouſſeau, Abbé Raynal, &c. &c. which Mr. Paine ſo much extols and recommends, overturned every idea of it, as well as of regal government. Thoſe who are converſant in their works will not heſitate to pronounce that from theſe ſources they learnt to deſpiſe their religion, their king, the clergy, and whatever was heretofore deemed ſacred honorable and uſeful.

The decree, declaring the property of the church to be that of the nation, having paſſed, thouſands of both ſexes have been, in conſequence of it, ſtripped of a comfortable maintenance, and in a manner ſent a begging, or obliged to live upon a precarious ſubſiſtence. To undermine religion more efficaciouſly, an oath was framed in ſuch equivocal and ambiguous terms as was ſure to be refuſed by every man of ſentiment and integrity. Thus, out of one hundred and thirty-one of the epiſcopal

pal order, only four have taken it. This is a ſtale trick of ſtate policy, which has been practiſed with more ſucceſs than honeſty in other countries beſides France. But to return. If ſo many of the epiſcopal order, as I ſaid, have refuſed this oath, how much greater muſt the number be among the inferior clergy? In fact ſo few have taken it, that they are obliged to accept of whatever they can get, and ordain and admit ſuch as are neither qualified by their education or morals for thoſe functions. But the people will have ſome ſhow of religion, * and to this the demagagoes, in ſpite of the leſſons they have culled from the works of Voltaire and other philoſophers, are obliged to conform. They are certainly very miſerable politicians that can ſuppoſe a ſtate may ſubſiſt without it. It is in direct oppoſition to experience, and never was ſuppoſed by any legiſlator whatever, before the preſent moment.

The impolitic and unjuſt meaſure, which they have adopted, of depriving the church of its patrimony, cannot be more amply aſcer-

* No nation under the ſun exiſts without ſome ſhow of religion. It is as appropriate to their nature as to eat, drink, or ſleep.

tained

tained than by precedent. This they had before their eyes, and might have profited of the miſtakes of others, had equity and the welfare of their country been the objects of their views. Many of the beſt men in this country (Proteſtants) have lamented the diſſolution of religious houſes throughout this iſland. What will become of the poor in France? Let Mr. Collier anſwer. "The abbeys ſuppreſſed in "England and Wales, ſays he, were ſix hun-"dred and forty-five, as Camden reports. "The yearly revenue is computed at "£. 135,522: 18: 10. — While the religious "houſes were ſtanding, there were no provi-"ſions for the poor. No aſſeſſment upon the "pariſh for that purpoſe. But now this charge "upon the kingdom (obſerve he wrote in "Queen Anne's reign) amounts at a modeſt "computation to 800,000*l. per annum.*" Now give me leave to remark that if we compute the annual income of £. 135,522: 18: 10 with the poor's tax, even of his time, it will appear what the nation has loſt by the diſſolution. Conſideration nevertheleſs is to be had to the different valuation of money in thoſe days and theſe; but this makes no difference in the nature of the burthen, which the preſent poſſeſſors of the abbey-lands would find, if the whole

charge of the poor was to be thrown upon them. It is allowed, the nation is grown more populous, and by this the number of the poor are proportionally increaſed; but are not the riches and trade of the nation increaſed in the ſame degree? Now it is ſomewhat myſterious, how a nation that increaſes in wealth ſhould abound with more beggars, unleſs ſacrilege has *entailed* that curſe upon them.

But what would Mr. Collier ſay, if he was now living, to the poor's tax of the preſent day? What would his aſtoniſhment be, when informed that it is tantamount to, if it does not exceed the yearly revenues of the kingdoms of Sweden and Denmark? And yet, to the diſgrace of the nation, the towns and country are over-run with beggars, and the poor are ſtill increaſing every day.

What compenſation will the National Aſſembly be able to make "for the advantages, "which they have now loſt, received from the "religious hoſes, which were conſiderable upon "ſeveral accounts. To mention ſome of them. "The temporal nobility and gentry had a cre-"ditable way of providing for their younger "children: Thoſe who were diſpoſed to with-"draw from the world, or not likely to make

their

" their fortune in it, had a handſome retreat
" in the cloiſter. Here they were furniſhed
" with conveniences for life and ſtudy, with
" opportunities for thought and recollection,
" and over and above paſſed their time in a
" condition not unbecoming their quality "
Give me leave to add that young ladies of ſmall fortunes, and old who were doomed to a life of celibacy have frequently experienced the propriety of Mr. Collier's remarks. They had a comfortable and genteel retreat, which they have now loſt. Another writer, no ways prejudiced in favor of the religion profeſſed in the convents, thinks that " to the want of ſuch
" retreats in a great meaſure are to be aſcri-
" bed the ſeveral inconveniences we lie under
" at this day; eſpecially ſince the frequent
" marriages of the meaner and indigent clergy,
" who having no temporal eſtates to ſupport
" their families after their death, leave their
" wives and daughters deſtitute and neceſſi-
" tous, who being too proud, or too lazy to
" work, often take ill courſes to ſubſiſt; all
" which might be prevented, if there were
" places to receive and ſupport them in a vir-
" tuous and comfortable way of life. From
" this defect reſults the lewdneſs of theſe aban-
" doned times, more than from any viciouſneſs

" in the temper or conſtitution of the Engliſh, " ſince we ſeldom find theſe diſorders in wo- " men of birth, fortune and education; while " others in ill circumſtances generally ſacrifice " themſelves to their vanity and neceſſities; "&c." (Higgin's Short View of the Hiſt. of England, Reign of Henry VIII.

" The abbeys, ſays Mr. Collier, were very " ſerviceable places for the education of " young people, who were taught without any " charge to their parents. And in the nunne- " ries thoſe of the other ſex learnt to work, " &c." He then proceeds to tell his readers, that it is to the abbeys we are obliged for moſt of our hiſtorians " of church and ſtate." Will not this apply equally to the abbeys in France? Where has there been a more learned, and conſequently a more uſeful body, than the congregation of St. Maurs?* " Beſides this rent- " charge (the poor's tax, which Mr. Collier " has been ſpeaking of) the nobility ſuffered " conſiderably." He then enumerates their loſſes upon the diſſolution, and ſays " The

† I might have mentioned the Jeſuits, who have excelled in every branch of literature. They taught youth *gratis*; and inſtilled into their pupils the love of virtue and rational ſubordination. Had their order not been aboliſhed, the revolution, ſuch as it is in France, would never have had an exiſtence.

" founders

" founders had the benefit of *corrodies*, that is, " they had the privilege of quartering a cer- " tain number of poor ſervants upon the ab- " beys. Thus people that were worn out " with age and labour, and in no condition to " ſupport themſelves, were not thrown up to " ſtarving, or pariſh collections, but had a com- " fortable retreat to the abbeys, where they " were maintained without hardſhip, or marks " of indigence, during life.

Let us now ſee what theſe hiſtorians ſay reſpecting the injuſtice of the diſſolution, and the means which were taken to effect it, both of which equally apply to France at the pre- ſent moment. " The rights and liberties of " the Church, ſays Mr. Collier, had been con- " firmed in thirty parliaments. They ſtand " in the front of *Magna Charta*. The endow- " ments of the Church were ſettled upon im- " portant conſiderations. For the honor of " God, the advancement of learning, for the " intereſts of eternity.——It is ſaid that the " monaſteries were of royal * foundation, and " therefore the taking them away, was only a " reſumption of grants from the crown. The

* Therefore " what the ſtate had given, the ſtate might take away." See Lord Robert Fitzgerald's Speech, page —.

" aſſertion

" aſſertion is wide of truth, as many of the " abbeys, &c. were founded by biſhops and " temporal lords, and ſome by gentry of leſſer " quality. Beſides all the eſtates in the king- " dom were grants from the crown, as appears " from the tenures: and it would have been " looked upon as an arbitrary attempt to have " taken them away. For a gift is a tranſla- " tion of right, extinguiſhes the title of the " donor, and veſts the property in another. " But this alienation was made by act of par- " liament; (or, let me add, by a decree of the " National Aſſembly) That is true; and there- " fore it was a legal ouſting. But then it will " be aſked, if a great part of the temporal lords " and other rich laity had been thrown out of " their eſtates by a ſtatute, whether ſuch pro- " ceedings would not have been thought an " inſtance of rigour, and myſterious authority? " Had they been thus impoveriſhed without " treaſon or felony to deſerve it, it may be the " legality of the form, and the pleaſure of the " legiſlators, would hardly reconcile them to " ſuch uſage.—It would be very much a que- " ſtion whether the heirs of the abbey-lands " would be ſo compliant with the crown, and " part ſo eaſily with their money, as the monks " had done.—Such an experiment upon men

" of

" of title and intereſt, of ſteel and ſtomach " might prove dangerous in the operation.— " When the Emperor Charles V. heard of the " fate of the Engliſh abbeys, he is reported to " have ſaid, that now the King had killed the " hen, which laid golden eggs." In fact, what immenſe ſums have not the French clergy at times raiſed for the benefit of the ſtate? And what an enormous ſum did not they offer (ſix hundred millions of livres) at this preſent moment? This reſource, which is now loſt, might have been of uſe at a future day. The abbeys muſt be rich, as they always live ſo much within the income of their revenues*.

To effect a diſſolution of theſe religious eſtabliſhments in France, they were obliged to have recourſe to the ſame vile means, which were practiſed in this country.

Mr. Thomas Hearne, in his preliminary obſervations upon Mr. Browne Willis's view of the mitred abbeys, ſays that Henry VIII.

* The beſt ſtated fact I can produce of the contributions of the French clergy to the ſtate is from the year 1734 to 1755. During this period they gratuitouſly gave to the King eighty-one millions of livres. The taxes they paid were likewiſe enormous. It is true, they were obliged to borrow the money for theſe gratuitous donations, which their economy however enabled them to be paying off yearly.

and

and his courtiers to gain their ends "paſſed "by no arts or contrivances that might poſ- "ſibly be of uſe in obtaining them. The "moſt abominable crimes were to be charged "upon the religious, and the charge was to be "managed with the utmoſt induſtry, boldneſs "and dexterity. This was a powerful argu- "ment to draw an odium upon them, and to "make them * diſreſpected, and ridiculed by "the generality of mankind." Has not this been done in France? Conſult the works of Voltaire, &c. Inſomuch that for theſe few years paſt a religious man has not been able to walk the ſtreets without being inſulted. But to proceed with Mr. Hearne. "Yet after "all, the *proofs were ſo inſufficient*, that by what "I have been able to gather, I have not found "one direct charge proved, not even againſt "any ſingle monaſtery."

"But, ſays Mr. Collier, granting that the "lives of the religious were not ſo ſtrict as "they ought to have been, it would have been "no ſufficient reaſon to ſeize their eſtates. If "inſobriety and miſbehaviour were ſufficient "grounds for forfeiture; if ill-living, and not

* For this purpoſe was the play of Charles IX. then written, and acted in Paris. For this purpoſe was *an auto da fé* exhibited in their theatre.

"anſwering

" anſwering the ends of an eſtate would juſti-
" fy the diſpoſſeſſing the owner, property would
" be very precarious, and tenures ſlenderly
" guarded.—Acts of Parliament have without
" queſtion authority to over-rule claims, ex-
" tinguiſh titles, and govern the courts of ju-
" ſtice. But are there not ſome things above
" the reach of the legiſlature? Can a ſtatute
" unconſecrate a church, enact a ſunday no ho-
" liday, or ſacrilege no ſin? Is not almighty
" God capable of property? If we muſt an-
" ſwer in the affirmative; how can an eſtate
" dedicated to his ſervice, and veſted in him,
" be taken away without his conſent? Which
" way can the intention of the donor, and the
" main deſign of the conveyance be over-
" looked, and defeated?

How the ſpoils of the religious houſes will be applied in France time alone can ſhow. But as the ſame cauſes have generally the ſame effects, we may make a ſhrewd gueſs from precedents alſo. Permit me to tranſcribe a few lines from Sir William Dugdale upon the ſubject; " All the fruit the people reaped, after
" all their hopes built upon theſe ſpecious
" pretences, *(viz.* as in France, by relieving
" the people from the oppreſſive taxes) was
" very little. For it is plain that ſubſidies
" from the (remaining) clergy, and fifteenths

" of lay-men's goods were ſoon after exacted:
" and that in King Edw. VIth's time the Com-
" mons were conſtrained to ſupply the King's
" wants by a new invention, *viz.* ſheep, cloaths,
" goods, debts, &c. for three years, which tax
" being ſo heavy, that the year following they
" prayed the King for a mitigation thereof."
Camden ſays " Notwithſtanding the immenſe
" ſpoils of the abbeys, King Henry VIII. was
" reduced to ſuch poverty that (to the utter
" ruin of commerce in this nation) he had
" corrupted the ſterling, or *Eaſterling* coin,
" which King Richard II. had declared to be
" the only lawful money of the kingdom."
And ſo much was it debaſed, that the effigy
of the beautiful King Henry appeared on the
teſtons with a red copper noſe. And had he
lived a little longer, a project was made to
coin leather money.

In the former tranſactions of this country,
relative to this ſubject, we may in a great mea-
ſure eſtimate the preſent proceedings in France.
The ſame cauſes, as I ſaid, will generally pro-
duce the ſame effects. " Abbey-lands, ſays
" Fuller, in his Church hiſtory, as the duſt
" flung up by Moſes, preſently diſperſe all the
" kingdom over, and at once become curſes
" both on the families and eſtates of the own-
" ers—for within twenty years next to the
" diſſolution

" diſſolution more of the nobility, and their " children, have been attainted, and died un- " der the ſword of juſtice, than did from the " conqueſt to the diſſolution, being almoſt " 500 years." If a counter-revolution ſhould be attempted in France (a thing not at all impoſſible) ſome future hiſtorian may make the ſame melancholy remark on that country.

The facts, relative to the Revolution in France, I have collected from a variety of French pamphlets written on the ſubject by parties on both ſides of the queſtion. When I found any of them poſitively aſſerted by one ſet of men, and not contradicted by the other, or palliated in ſuch a manner as to be tantamount to a conceſſion, I thought I might venture to ſtate them as facts: I vouch for their authenticity no farther *. If I have arraigned their proceedings with freedom, it was their proceedings only I meant to cenſure, and not their attempts for liberty. I

* If it be aſked, if men can be guilty of ſuch facts as I have related? let them read the works of the modern philoſophers, and give the anſwer. The majority in the Aſſembly are profeſſedly the diſciples of theſe philoſophers. They are now, and indeed have been paying almoſt divine honours to them. According to the old proverb, " Tell me what company you keep, and I will tell " you what you are."

wiſh it ſincerely to all the children of Adam. I know the full value of it, having the happineſs to enjoy a portion of it myſelf. But it is rational liberty I contend for, ſuch as is conſiſtent with the peace and welfare of ſociety. Every man, ſays Mr. Paine, has undoubted natural rights; but he juſtly adds, thoſe rights do not warrant him to encroach upon thoſe of his neighbour. I moſt cordially wiſh that the ſucceeding generation in France may in ſome meaſure atone by their good deeds for the miſtakes of the preſent day; and as fermenting liquors by degrees work off their feculance, ſuch a reformation both in church and ſtate may take place, as will redound to the glory of God, and the happineſs of the people. There were undoubtedly very great acts of cruelty and injuſtice committed in this nation, both at the Reformation, and at the * Revolution in 1688; but theſe are almoſt forgotten by the peace and happineſs we now enjoy.

I am very well convinced therefore that the argument may be retorted upon me, nevertheleſs I ſhall take the liberty to cenſure what appears to be cenſurable. It was the fate of Lord Robert Fitzgerald, which however has not in the leaſt detracted from his merit in

* Witneſs the many innocent perſons who ſuffered for Oat's plot and others; all tending to promote the ſame end, humanely

humanely and benevolently ſtanding forth in defence of the Iriſh and Scotch colleges in France, which lay under the general proſcription. "The ground which Lord Robert Fitz-" gerald took, ſay our newſpapers, for this ex-" emption was, that whatever property thoſe " colleges poſſeſſed in France, it had been all " purchaſed with money carried from Ireland " and Scotland; that the endowments of thoſe " colleges not having been French, but Bri-" tiſh from the beginning, the principle that " what the ſtate had given, the ſtate could " take, could not attach upon them; or if it " did, it was only to ſhow that the ſtate could " not in juſtice take thoſe endowments for " the beſt of all reaſons, becauſe it was not " from the bounty of France that they were " held; on the contrary, a valuable conſide-" ration had been given for them, and the a-" mount of it was paid with Britiſh money."

"One member juſt obſerved upon it, that " the preſent æra was fertile in revolutions, " as aſtoniſhing as they were new. He ſaid " it was not more ſurpriſing to ſee a Nation-" al Aſſembly ſitting amidſt the ruins of deſ-" potiſm, in the capital of France, giving " laws to the kingdom, than to ſee the Mini-" ſter of a Proteſtant King pleading the cauſe " of the catholic ſubjects of that monarch,

" whom

"whom the intolerant ſpirit of penal laws had "forced to become refugees in a foreign "land; and who would inſtantly ceaſe to be re-"fugees, if their own government would ceaſe "to be intolerant. To refuſe them protection "at home, and afford it to them in a foreign "ſtate, was a phenomenon both in politics "and common ſenſe. The ſtep taken by "Lord Robert Fitzgerald ſeemed to be the "conſequence of a ſtruggle between abſurd "policy on the one hand, and wiſdom on the "other; and he rejoiced that the latter had "triumphed; but he remarked, however, "that its triumph could not be complete till "England ſhould have learned to treat all its "inhabitants as ſubjects, and not force any of "them to ſeek abroad for that protection, "which penal laws, attaching not upon crimes, "but upon conſcience, do not ſuffer them to "find at home."

I begin to fear that I have now tired you with this long letter; too ſhort however it certainly is for the magnitude of the ſubject, which poſſibly may give you as much pain to read, as it has to me to relate. The hiſtory of nations, Voltaire very juſtly obſerves, is but a recapitulation and a memorial of their crimes. A moſt melancholy reflection! To releaſe you therefore from this painful ſub-

ject,

ject, I ſhall only add that if the King attempts an eſcape (which I think very probable, if he can do it), it will prove to demonſtration the ill treatment he has received, and the danger to which his life is expoſed. No other motive, but that of ſelf-preſervation, would tempt him to quit his preſent reſidence, and riſk his crown, even ſuch as it is in its preſent ſtate of debaſement.

As to the oath which he has taken to preſerve the conſtitution as by law eſtabliſhed, it never can be deemed binding, becauſe he was not free * when they forced it upon him. He had

* He was then, as he is ſtill, a priſoner. Had the faction thought the oath binding, why did they deprive him of his liberty?——The following extract from Judge Blacſtone will ſet this matter in a clear light: "An involuntary act," ſays he, "as it has no claim to merit, ſo "neither can it induce any guilt; the concurrence of the "will, when it has its choice either to do or avoid the "fact in queſtion, being the only thing that renders human actions either praiſe-worthy or culpable. Indeed, "to make a compleat crime cognizable by human laws, "there muſt be both a will and an act; to conſtitute a "crime againſt human laws there muſt be firſt a vicious "will, &c. One caſe in which the will does not join "with the act, is where the action is conſtrained by ſome "outward force and violence. Here the will counteracts "the deed, and is ſo far from concurring with, that it "loaths and diſagrees to what the man is obliged to per-"form.

had no alternative. Life, though chequered with ſo many evils, is ſweet; and the anxious concerns for a family make moſt men pauſe, when they ſtand upon the brink of eternity. Lewis XVI. therefore preferred the poiſoned cup of life to the ſword of the aſſaſſin, or the mockery of a judicial (though not unprecedented) trial. His hard fate (for of moſt of his predeceſſors he deſerved it the leaſt) may prove an awful leſſon to all the Kings of the earth. That they may amply profit by it, both for their own ſake, and the peace and happineſs of their ſubjects, is the cordial wiſh and ardent prayer of,

Dear Sir,

Your ever obliged,

and moſt humble Servant,

June 7th, 1791.

* * * * * *

" form. One ſpecies of defect of will is that ariſing from " *compulſion* and inevitable *neceſſity*.—There a conſtraint " upon the will whereby a man is urged to do that which " his judgment diſapproves; and which, it is to be pre- " ſumed, his will (if left to itſelf) would reject. As pu- " niſhments are therefore only inflicted for the abuſe of " that free-will which God has given to men; it is highly " juſt and equitable that a man ſhould be excuſed for " thoſe acts which are done through unavoidable force " and compulſion."

THE Six following Letters are printed with the ſame view and intention as a foregoing one on the 7th of laſt June. They are printed juſt as they were written, without the leaſt correction or reviſal whatever; whoever therefore deigns to peruſe them, will readily excuſe every grammatical error he may meet with, when he is aſſured that the writer has been (as he always is) more attentive to ſtate with accuracy the facts he adduces, than to the rigid preciſion of language, eſpecially when he addreſſes his friends in a familiar ſtile.

ERRATA.

Page 5. read power.
20. r. fear, not feel.
33. dele in note *however*.

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR,

THE man, I find, who preſumes to think for himſelf concerning the late revolution in France, and refuſes to be led down the ſtream of popular opinion, is immediately marked and ſtigmatized as an *ariſtocrate*. It has thus fared with me in conſequence of the letter which I took the liberty to write to you on that ſubject on the 7th of laſt June. Such an appellation may be very faſhionable, yet it appears to me to be very vague, and very ill applied to thoſe who ultimately diſapprove of it, after having maturely weighed its merits and demerits in the ſcales of impartiality. Thoſe gentlemen however, who are pleaſed to make uſe of that epithet, ought previouſly to define in what ſenſe the word *ariſtocrate* is to be taken. If they ſuppoſe it to mean the abettor of arbitrary and deſpotic power in go-

vernment, I am no *ariſtocrate*, nor do I believe at this moment any ſuch exiſt even in France. On the contrary, if the true and genuine ſenſe be affixed to that word, I profeſs myſelf openly to be of that deſcription: and I will venture to affirm that my ideas on the ſubject will be approved and ſanctioned by the ſenſible and diſintereſted part of mankind.

I am the abettor of an ariſtocracy (not in the ſenſe, permit me to repeat it, which popular opinion is pleaſed to affix to that word) becauſe I am fully convinced that the natural wants of mankind require a certain gradation of powers to adminiſter to their neceſſities; that this gradation neceſſarily implies a higher and a lower claſs of people, and that therefore the latter muſt be ſubordinate and ſubſervient in a certain degree to the former, for if all are to command, there will be none to obey and execute, conſequently the neceſſary and mutual wants of ſociety can never be duly adminiſtered unto. Indeed to me it appears a wretched loſs of time to dwell upon ſuch a pitiful argument, confuted as it is, and ever has been by the conſtant experience of mankind. For in this ſuppoſition every individual muſt depend totally upon himſelf. He muſt

muſt retire to the woods, from whence he came, and lead the ſavage life of a wild and ſequeſtered Indian.

But permit me to aſk the queſtion, what were the motives which induced our ſavage anceſtors to leave their ſolitary abodes, and to unite in ſociety among themſelves? They were moſt undoubtedly with the view of profiting of thoſe neceſſary aids and helps, which are only to be attained by a ſocial compact, and which (as I have already obſerved) can only operate by a certain and well-regulated gradation of powers. Some muſt till the ground, ſow the grain, and reap the corn, that all may have the means of ſupporting life: whilſt others, by their induſtry and invention, are adding to the comforts and luxuries of it.

All ſocial compacts, it is certain, were very rude and imperfect on the firſt eſſay; but as neceſſity, which is the mother of invention, gave birth to their union in the firſt inſtance, ſo by degrees it expanded their ideas, and produced a gradual improvement. The mental faculties of men are very variable. Some men are endowed with a far greater portion of underſtanding than others. Theſe will always take the lead, and be looked up to with reſpect and veneration by thoſe

who do not ſo amply poſſeſs that bleſſing. Hence will the labourer be directed in the beſt method of cultivating the ground, the choice of the ſoil, and the grain adapted to it, by the perſon whom he knows to be better qualified to judge of thoſe matters than himſelf. Hence alſo will the component parts of a building be planned and prepared under the direction of a ſuperior head; and thus (as I obſerved) do all parties mutually help and aſſiſt each other.

Moreover in all ſocieties, compoſed as they are of individuals who labour under the defects inherent in human nature, it is neceſſary that ſome ſuperior powers ſhould be eſtabliſhed to ſettle differences which may ariſe among them, and to protect the injured parties from oppreſſion. It is likewiſe neceſſary, as they may be expoſed to the incurſions and attempts of an enemy, that ſome perſon or perſons ſhould be choſen from amongſt them to collect, diſcipline and harmonize the whole force, ſo as to give it one ſteady and uniform direction, and thus be able to repel the attacks, which may be made upon their perſons and property. From common experience in the world we cannot but be convinced that no ſociety can exiſt without the choice of

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ſuch perſons, delegated for the purpoſes aforeſaid, call them chiefs, generals, kings, protectors, or what you pleaſe, to whom this kind of ſupremacy muſt be given. Theſe neceſſary qualifications, in my humble opinion, in every ſociety conſtitute an ariſtocracy, for the *great* in talents, induſtry, and conſequently in wealth will always be *great* in powers. You will readily reply that no body doubts it; and whatever levelling doctrines deſigning and intereſted men hold forth to allure the people to their own private ends, they fully know that they never can ſtand good in practice. Yet, as we ſee, they have ſerved the preſent purpoſe in France. The people have been inveigled to their own deſtruction by that wretched ſophiſtry—the rights of ſociety have been invaded—ſovereigns have been hurled from their thrones—ſacrilege and injuſtice has ſtalked through the land—a whole country; an edifice, the work of ages, ruined, and laid level to the ground!

You ſee that I am reſolved freely to give my thoughts on the ſubject, heedleſs of the cenſures I may incur from the ſhafts of diſappointed ambition, or the preſſing wants of intereſted knaves. In my next (not to treſ-

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paſs too much upon your patience) I will give you a few of the arguments made uſe of by the firſt of the novel philoſophers in ſupport of that equality among men, which has turned the heads of almoſt the whole French nation, and bids fair unfortunately to make ſome progreſs in this iſland, if not counteracted by the good ſenſe of the people in general. If my poor endeavours, ſuch as they are, can in any degree contribute to keep the levelling monſter at a diſtance, they ſhall be inceſſantly employed in a cauſe ſo eſſential to the happineſs of mankind in general, and to the peace and glory of this country in particular.

I remain,

Dear Sir, &c.

Margate,
Sept. 16th, 1791.

LET-

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR,

IT is difficult to conceive how a man of Monſieur de Voltaire's good ſenſe and penetration ſhould fall into ſuch a multiplicity of miſtakes and incoherences on ſo trivial a ſubject as the inequality of the things of this world. He maintains that perfect equality exiſts no where but amongſt animals. "All "animals, he ſays, are equal; but man, hav- "ing received that portion of ſupernatural "light, which he calls reaſon, is a ſlave "throughout the globe."

With humble ſubmiſſion however to the philoſopher, it is certain that a perfect equality does not generally exiſt among animals. Many of them, through natural inſtinct, ſubdue and tyrannize over others. The jackall is ſuppoſed to be the lion's purveyor; to ſeek his food, no part of which he dares to touch, until his royal maſter's appetite is ſatiated. There are doubtleſs many other inſtances

ſtances of ſervitude (if I may call it by that name) in natural hiſtory among the brute-creation. Certain it is at leaſt that the weakeſt animals are a prey to the ſtronger. It is moreover an abuſe of terms to give to every ſpecies of dependence the name of ſlavery. That word ſhould only be made uſe of when dependence is carried to exceſs, and makes a man miſerable. Such an independence as animals enjoy, inſtead of making a man eaſy in his ſituation, would render him the moſt miſerable of all beings. Neither is it ſtrictly correct that the dependent ſtate of man in regard of his equals is in conſequence of his reaſon, it being rather the effect of his neceſſities. The philoſopher himſelf confeſſes it, as you will ſee hereafter. Reaſon indeed plainly points out to us the neceſſity and juſtice of that dependence, but it is not the primary cauſe. A philoſopher, who is deſirous of inſtructing the world, ought always to ſpeak correctly.

" If a man, he ſays, had met every where " with an eaſy, certain and ſafe ſubſiſtence, " and a climate ſuitable to his nature, it is " manifeſtly impoſſible that one man could " have enſlaved another. . . . . Then the Ta- " merlans of the earth would have had no

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" other domeſtics than their own children." Here he acknowledges two ſources from whence dependence naturally flows. The firſt from our neceſſities;—the ſecond from the duty and affection which we owe to our parents. Parents have therefore naturally a right to demand the ſervices of their children, being indebted to them for their life, education, and every care and attention in the courſe of their infancy and youth.

" In this ſo natural a ſtate (he adds) which " all quadrupeds, birds and reptiles enjoy, " men would be as happy as they." Abſolute independence, as I ſaid, is not the natural ſtate of all animals in general. All thoſe animals, for example, which are called domeſtic, are naturally dependent on man. Were they to be conſigned to the woods, many of them would pine away and periſh for want of proper ſuſtenance, or become an eaſy prey to beaſts of ſuperior ſtrength. The thick and heavy fleece would incommode the ſheep in the heats of ſummer, if men, at the time that he profits of the wool, did not an eſſential ſervice to the animal by ſheering it to clothe himſelf. The beaſts, when ſatiated in their paſtures, ſeek of their own accord the ſhed which is conſtructed to ſhelter them from the incle-

mency of the weather. The bird, when tamed, returns eagerly to the cage, wherein he has been accuſtomed to find his food.

It is ſtill more erroneous to ſay that a man inhabiting the woods after the manner of beaſts, would be equally happy as they are, for nature has not given to him the ſame induſtry to procure a ſubſiſtence, nor the ſame means of defence, or the ſame clothing to defend him from the inclemency of the weather. The more ſavage men are, the more they are fearful, penſive and melancholy.

"All men, he ſays, would be neceſſarily "equal, if they had no wants." Poſſibly it might be ſo. But it is evident that the great Author of nature ſubjected them to thoſe wants that they might be forced into ſociety, for which he deſigned them. Mutual dependence therefore is natural, and very conformable to the views of the Creator.

According to our philoſopher, "it is de- "pendence, and not inequality, which is a real "evil." But every ſpecies of dependence is not a real evil. It is oftentimes, with truth, ſaid that ſervants are happier than their maſters. Indeed, generally ſpeaking, the higher a man is elevated in rank and dignity, the more dependent he is on others. "It is

"impoſſible,

" impoſſible, he ſays, it ſhould be otherwiſe. " In this world we muſt be divided into two " claſſes; the one of oppreſſors, and the " other of the oppreſſed." The thing however might be very poſſibly otherwiſe, as in fact it really is, if mankind were uniformly attentive to the voice of reaſon, and to the leſſons which religion preſcribes. *Do, as you would be done by,* is a precept deeply engraved in the heart of man. Religion teaches them to behold each other as brethren of the ſame family; to love and mutually aſſiſt each other with the ſame zeal and affection, as they themſelves would wiſh to receive. It teaches thoſe of inferior ſtation that reſpect and obedience which is due to their ſuperiors; and at the ſame time it commands the latter to treat the former in every reſpect with mildneſs, equity, and every reaſonable indulgence. The chriſtian religion has either totally aboliſhed, or at leaſt (where it is ſtill retained) rendered ſlavery leſs oppreſſive. It has made governments leſs ſevere, and men leſs ſanguinary. If the preſent race of philoſophers had as great a love for mankind, as they pretend, they would ſhow a greater reſpect of a religion, which preſcribes and inculcates ſuch rules and maxims, as alone can make men happy.

Our philoſopher contends that "equality "is, at the ſame time, both the moſt natural, "and the moſt chimerical thing in the world." This is a rank contradiction with what has been ſaid above. The inequality of mankind, and their mutual dependence is in conſequence of their wants, of their gratitude, and even of their paſſions. The philoſopher himſelf acknowledges it. Theſe are inſeparable from humanity, therefore mutual dependence is equally ſo. How then can equality be natural?

"Every man, he adds, has a right to be-"lieve himſelf equal to other men." But a child has not a right to think himſelf equal to his father. Nature gives to the latter a ſuperiority and a right to command. Unleſs a man is entirely blinded by pride, a malady too prevalent at this day, he muſt allow that ſome perſons are far ſuperior to others in accompliſhments both natural and acquired.

Throughout the whole of this ſubject, as Monſieur de Voltaire has treated it, there is nothing to be perceived that characterizes the man of genius! Nothing in his reaſoning; no moral to be gathered from it, which may prove profitable and uſeful to us! Inſtead of

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eſtabliſhing, as an inconteſtable fact, that marked deſign of Providence, which has conſtituted that inequality of conditions, which we meet with in this life, and to which we are bound to ſubmit, he has treated it as the effect of chance; the end or utility of which being totally imperceptible, can bind no man.

A moſt deteſtable leſſon indeed, which opens a door to every crime, and to every thing that is peſtilential to ſociety. But as it is ſaid that all poiſonous animals carry within themſelves their own proper antidotes, ſo does our philoſopher, who, at the concluſion of all his metaphyſical jargon, declares that "it does not follow from hence, that a man "is excuſed in neglecting the duty of his ſta-"tion: were it ſo, there would be an end "of human ſociety."

I remain,

Dear Sir, &c.

Margate,
Oct. 25th, 1791.

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LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

SITTING the other night in a retired part of the coffee-room, I perceived that you was engaged with two other gentlemen in tracing the cauſes, which produced the French revolution. As I am always eager to acquire information in general, and particularly ſo on a ſubject which now almoſt engroſſes the converſation of every body, I took the liberty to attend to the arguments which were adduced in ſupport of your opinions. They created in my mind the following reflections, which I beg leave to ſubmit to your conſideration.

Although I readily join iſſue with you, that there were many partial and accidental circumſtances, which, combining together, by degrees effected that aſtoniſhing event, yet there does not appear to me to have been any one regular ſyſtem, or well concerted plan, which as a primary agent immediately directed

directed it. The greateſt events have frequently happened in this world from the remoteſt and un-thought of cauſes. I could produce many proofs of my aſſertion. Let one however ſuffice, which is (if I may ſay ſo) almoſt within our own memory. When this nation invited the Prince of Orange to defend their civil and religious liberties againſt the encroachments of King James II. little did they dream of promoting a revolution. I ſpeak of the majority of the nation, for there were ſelf-intereſted individuals (as there will be in all countries) who, for their own purpoſes, promoted the ambitious deſigns of William III. which he had formed long before the death of Charles II. I refer you to the beſt hiſtorians on that period for the truth of my aſſertion.

The interference of the French in our diſputes with America, which you reaſonably ſuppoſe to have been one of the cauſes of the revolution, which afterwards took place in that nation, was not more unjuſt in itſelf, than it was impolitic on their part. But nations, like individuals, are apt to ſacrifice every intereſt to revenge. Otherwiſe it would be difficult to conceive that Monſieur de Vergennes, whom I ſuppoſe to have been miniſter of ſtate

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at that period, was ſo blind a politician not to foreſee the danger of ſuch a connection. And I believe him to have been too determined an ariſtocrate in principle, according to the very rigour of the word, to have promoted it, when his own favorite ſyſtem of government might have ſuffered in the conſequences. Be that as it may, the impolicy of the French miniſtry, in my opinion, conſiſted in draining their treaſury for the ſole purpoſe of oppreſſing an enemy, who had ſo conſpicuouſly triumphed over them in the preceding war. From the moment that the peace was ſigned in 1762 they never loſt ſight of this their darling object. Heedleſs of the conſequences, theſe ſhort ſighted politicians haſtily embarked in a cauſe, which ſoon after brought ruin and deſolation on themſelves.

It may eaſily be ſuppoſed that the French imbibed opinions of freedom and independence during their reſidence in America. But theſe opinions, and indeed thoſe of a far greater latitude, and of much more dangerous tendency, had got the ſtart of them in their own country, and were daily improving in the gay and faſhionable world. It only remained that they ſhould be diffuſed and diſſeminated among the people. This work was

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ſoon put into execution, and carried on with addreſs. It ſucceeded accordingly. As to the meaſures which the French purſued towards the attainment of their favorite object, they by far exceeded their tranſ-atlantic friends. And I believe that an American would be much offended if any compariſon between the two nations in that reſpect was attempted; for though he would readily acknowledge that there were too many acts of violence committed in his country through party rage, and under the ſpecious pretext of retaliation, yet he would bluſh to hear his countrymen branded and reproached with thoſe ſavage butcheries, and deliberate acts of barbarity which, to the indelible diſgrace of the nation, have been perpetrated in France. In the height of popular commotion, when the minds of the people are worked up into a kind of frenzy, we cannot be ſurpriſed at the exceſſes they commit. But to perpetrate ſuch bloody deeds with cool deliberation, and under the ſpecious pretext of juſtice, wants a name. It cannot, I will venture to affirm, for ſavage brutality, be matched in any civilized country under the globe. So lately as within theſe twelve months, when it might be ſuppoſed that their ſavage cruelty was ſome-

what abated, they ſeized a reſpectable printer of Douay (Derbais by name) in his own houſe. They forcibly dragged him out of it; and though not a crime, but that of ſuſpicion, (which has always been a ſufficient warrant for them) could be proved againſt the poor wretch, they tied him to a horſe's tail, and thus tore him limb from limb. Other indignities and wanton cruelties they committed upon the mangled carcaſe of this devoted victim, which were as refined, as they were infamous; but ſuch as are in every reſpect too painful to relate. Thus they exhibited a ſavage ferocity, which would put the wildeſt Indian to the bluſh, and for ever cloſe the jaws of a cannibal at the ſight of blood. A wild beaſt, when he ſeizes his prey through the impulſe of hunger, devours, but does not wantonly torment the trembling victim, which lies proſtrate at his feet.

I now return to my ſubject. The corner ſtone of the French revolution, or rather, I may ſay, the foundation of that fabric, was laid by the writings of that ſet of men who, by the perverſion of common ſenſe and common language, are called philoſophers. By this I do not mean to reprobate the totality of their writings. They have undoubtedly given

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ſome excellent ſtrictures on various ſubjects to the public; but they likewiſe have publiſhed ſuch as may juſtly brand them as the avowed enemies of mankind, and the peſts of ſociety. They diſcredit virtue—palliate, and apologiſe for vice, and endeavour with all the energy of their wit and ingenuity to overturn every principle, which the experience of ages has ſanctioned, and deemed eſſentially neceſſary for the peace and welfare of mankind.——They hold up to public view all the ſovereigns of the Chriſtian world as ſo many tyrants and deſpots, who wantonly ſport with the lives and fortunes of their ſubjects. The clergy they deſcribe as ſo many hypocrites and knaves, who ought to be exterminated from the face of the earth. Theſe ideas being fixed on the minds of the people, we may ceaſe to wonder at the degradation of Lewis XVI.; and at the annihilation of the clergy in France. Religion, according to theſe doctors, is only fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition: morality a bare name: vice and virtue of equal inſignificance.

In this abandoned groupe of levelling philoſophers *Voltaire* ſtands foremoſt. The legiſlative body of the French nation has paid almoſt divine honors to his departed manes;

and his aſhes are looked up to as the embers from which the freedom of France has been light up. By this *one act*, they have declared themſelves his diſciples, and the avowed abettors of his doctrines. In ſeveral parts of his works he reprobates every idea of a future ſtate. From whence it follows, that there can be no rewards for virtue; no puniſhments for vice hereafter. There can be conſequently no inducement to practiſe the one, or to avoid the other, but what may ariſe from the feat of the gallows. Laws then muſt be multiplied, and made ſevere to exceſs. What will be the conſequence? A moſt corrupt government, as a judicious writer remark. "Plurimæ le-" ges, corruptiſſima reſpublica." Another author, equally judicious, makes the ſame remark. He affirms that "Society is ever in-" effectual and miſerable in proportion to the " number and ſeverity of its legal reſtraints." They tell us however that public virtue (which by the bye is a high ſounding name without any meaning, particularly with the maſs of the people, that is, with three fourths of mankind) and true patriotiſm will bind all the members of a ſtate to the due obſervance of the laws. Be it ſo. Yet heretofore they had religion likewiſe to enforce that obedi-

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ence. With both theſe motives however, can we ſay that they never ſwerved from the rule of right? How then can we ſuppoſe that without religion, men will be equally virtuous, and leſs vicious? It is as much as to ſay, that by taking off one of the ſtrongeſt chains which confine a wild beaſt, the animal would be better and more ſafely ſecured.

Voltaire however is not always inſenſible of the futility of this argument. He contradicts himſelf, it is true; but contradictions coſt him little, writing ſometimes in favor of Atheiſm, Deiſm, Materialiſm, Socinianiſm, &c. &c. He ſays that "Laws avail nothing "againſt ſecret crimes. There muſt be an a-"venging God puniſhing in this world, or the "other, thoſe delinquents, who have eſcaped "human juſtice." In one part of his works (and indeed the temper of the times ſeems to verify his aſſertion) he compares man to an unruly horſe, and ſays, "If he has not a ſtrong "bit in his mouth, he will be apt to run away "with the rider," yet (as I ſaid) in other parts of his writings, he ridicules all religion, which undoubtedly is the ſtrongeſt curb a man can poſſibly have to his paſſions. May we not then, with great propriety, apply his own lines to himſelf?

"Tel

" Tel eſt l'homme en effet! Il va du blonc au noir,
" Et condamne au matin, ſes ſentimens du ſoir."

Nevertheleſs the elegance of his language, his ſarcaſtic ſtyle, the witty ridicule he throws upon the moſt ſerious ſubjects, and above all the pleaſant and flattering doctrines which he inculcates to thoſe who ſeek to emancipate themſelves from all civil and religious reſtraints, cannot fail to gain him many admirers, and to make many proſelytes. Mr. Paine, in his *Rights of Man*, tells his readers that the people are apt ſcholars. In iniquity, I believe, no body doubts the juſtice of the obſervation, when they turn an eye towards France.

There indeed they may ſee the fruits of thoſe horrid doctrines in the total ſubverſion of all that was good and ſacred. As I have obſerved before, they had gained upon the gay and faſhionable world. It only remained to have them diſſeminated among the people. This was eaſily done. The ſubtle poiſon was conveyed to them in pamphlets of the loweſt price, and (like Mr. Paine's late performance) circulated *gratis* throughout the kingdom. Yet nothing, I believe, faſcinated the minds of the people ſo effectually, as the doctrine of the equality of mankind, which ſeems to

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have been the lure of deſigning men, and (as I may ſay) the baſis of this new code of government; a doctrine as ridiculous in theory, as it is impoſſible in practice.

Among the adepts formed in the ſchool of this arch-legiſlator (for there were many *almoſt* as bad as himſelf) appears the name of Mirabeau. He was perfectly well trained, and properly inſtructed in every vice that could poſſibly degrade human nature. The city of Aix choſe him for their repreſentative. Such was the excellent judgment of this new *ſovereign* by *right divine*, the people, (or rather the populace) who rejecting its former miniſters for their immorality, choſe for its *favorite*, a man as notoriouſly immoral as the worſt of the courtiers. As the character of Mirabeau, for infamy, is diſputed by none, I need not appeal to his confeſſion, nor to the records of the Old Bailey for a corroboration of the fact. I ſhall therefore only add that to this ſame Mirabeau the legiſlative body of the French nation has paid the greateſt honors, as equally indebted to his labors for their recent revolution in both church and ſtate. His buſt, cut on a ſtone of the demoliſhed Baſtile, has been placed in the new Pantheon, deſtined to preſerve the memory of departed

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Gallic worthies. When the artiſt humbly offered it to the *Auguſt Senate*, and the preſent accepted, one of the ſecretaries aſked if the name of Mirabeau ſhould be inſerted without any addition. "We know of but one Mi-"rabeau" was the anſwer of that *ſublime* Aſſembly. To theſe two *great* perſonages; (if I may call them ſuch) Voltaire and Mirabeau, is the French nation principally indebted for its *glorious* revolution, as I ſaid. Voltaire is canonized. And he and Mirabeau hold the moſt diſtinguiſhed places in the temple of worthies!

Happy are they who take warning at the misfortunes of others. In every nation, where the people are deſirous of paſſing through the thorny paths of this world in as peaceable a manner as it will admit: where they wiſh to tranſmit that portion of happineſs and eaſe, which they themſelves enjoy; to poſterity, they cannot too effectually guard againſt ſuch doctors and ſuch doctrines. We have them unfortunately within our own boſoms. Ambitious, knaviſh, and ruined men are to be found in all countries, who having little or nothing to loſe, may hope to get ſomething in the ſcramble. It is therefore the immediate intereſt of all people: it is the

intereſt

intereſt alſo, I ſhould imagine, as well as a duty which all ſovereigns owe to their ſubjects, not only effectually to guard againſt, but to unite in a body for the deſtruction of this levelling monſter. The evil is only to be eradicated at the ſource. In vain are French writings prohibited, and French Democrates proſcribed in Spain, and elſewhere. They have their emiſſaries in every kingdom and ſtate throughout Europe. They foment diſcontents, and keep the expiring ſparks of rebellion alive in Auſtrian Flanders. In this manner they have acquired the ſovereignty of Avignon, and have been trying hard for Geneva, Berne, &c. They correſpond with a *certain ſociety* in this country; and ſtrange to tell! reciprocal addreſſes of mutual friendſhip and intereſts have paſſed between them. It was a French democrate, who harangued the company on the 14th of July laſt at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand. Mounted on a table, he bellowed forth the excellencies of the French revolution. Was not this aiming a ſide-blow at the conſtitution of that country, which the great majority of the people decidedly approve of, and which at that moment protected both his perſon and property?

Do not miſtake me however. I am no advocate for deſpotiſm. That ſpecies of government is wearing out in Europe, and in a few years, it is to be hoped, if at all exiſting, it will be confined to the Eaſtern regions. Surely there is a medium between deſpotic power, and the ſubverſion of every thing? It is a diſtinction however which few people, and in particular our newſpaper writers ſeldom or never make. If any ſchemes are ſuppoſed to be forming by the French emigrants, or others for the recovery of their natural rights, of which they have been unjuſtly and tyrannically deſpoiled, they are immediately branded as attempting to introduce the old form of government with all its horrid appendages of arbitrary and deſpotic power. The King of France however, they may be aſſured, was cheerfully diveſting himſelf of thoſe prerogatives, which marked him as a deſpot. The nobles had offered, even before they had choſen a repreſentative in the ſtates-general, to pay a full proportion of the taxes with the reſt of the nation; and the clergy, in a great meaſure, to liquidate the public debt. They even conſented to the abolition

of

of tithes*, that bane to induſtry, and the perpetual ſource of diviſion between the paſtor and his flock, for a compenſation in land. But providence had ordained things otherwiſe, and time alone can ſhow the effects they will produce.

After much confuſion, order will ſometimes ariſe. We have had examples of it in our own country. If theſe French levellers then are ſuffered to proceed unmoleſted, poſſibly ſomething like a government may at laſt be formed. In this caſe, whatever their real miſeries may be, imaginary advantages will be trumpeted forth; the unwary and uninformed, will be impoſed upon, and at laſt become ſeriouſly anxious to ſhare thoſe ideal

* Nothing can give us a worſe idea of their legiſlation, than their decree on this laſt article. They have ſuffered the rithes to revert to the proprietors of the lands, who undoubtedly could have neither right or claim to them. For if they received the lands either as bequeſts, or by purchaſe, they were equally charged with the tithes, which were no part either of the bequeſt or the purchaſe. Inſtead then of reſerving theſe tithes for the pitiful remnant of their *own* clergy, they have thrown the whole burden upon the nation at large, three fourths of which have no intereſt in the land whatever.

bleſſings which they are made to believe the French enjoy in conſequence of their revolution. Intereſted men, and thoſe of deſperate fortunes will be on the tip-toe of expectation, and fan the flame of rebellion. Thus Europe will become one ſcene of anarchy, confuſion, and blood-ſhed. God forbid. Let then ſurrounding nations and ſurrounding princes never loſe ſight of that wiſe old adage, which warns them that

" When thy neighbour's houſe does burn,
" Take heed the next is not thy turn."

I am, Dear Sir,

Your very obedient humble ſervant,

Margate,
Oct. 16th, 1791.

LET-

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR,

I Believe you was as much ſurpriſed as myſelf to hear a certain gentleman in our company the other day attempt to vindicate the proceedings of the French National Aſſembly, to extol their legiſlation, and propoſe it as a model and pattern for other nations to copy after. This he did with more apparent zeal, than force of argument. Having paſſed a few months in France lately, it may be ſuppoſed he thought himſelf better qualified to judge of thoſe matters, than any other perſon preſent. As I hate diſputes of all kinds, and particularly in a public company, I remained (unwillingly I own) ſilent; reſolved however to communicate my ideas on the ſubject to ſome of my friends, who were then preſent, at a future day. Perceiving that you was particularly attentive to the diſcourſe, I take the liberty of addreſſing my opinions to you in this

this manner, and I ſhall be happy if they merit your approbation.

The preſent conſtitution of France, inſtead of being a chef-d'œuvre of political ſcience, as that gentleman would fain inſinuate, appears to me (with very few exceptions indeed) the very reverſe. It is radically vicious in many points. No form of government can be otherwiſe, which is not founded on religion and morality. Such has been the fixed idea of every legiſlator from the beginning of the world to this preſent day, big indeed with diſcoveries heretofore unthought of, and unknown. It is a fact however, which no man of reading will deny.

That the preſent legiſlators of France have had no regard for either religion or morality is ſufficiently demonſtrated, without the aſſiſtance of any other collateral proofs, by the affected honors they have paid to the aſhes of Voltaire, and would have paid to Rouſſeau, could they have perſuaded the preſent poſſeſſor of the precious relics of that departed *ſaint* to have ſurrendered them to their wiſhes. By adopting theſe bold and bare-faced advocates and zealous partiſans of licentiouſneſs and infidelity in the face of all the world, they have openly diſcovered the ſentiments of their own

hearts.

hearts. According to the wiſe old proverb "Tell me what company you keep, and I "will tell you what you are," we may be allowed to give a ſhrewd gueſs at the principles of the diſciples by thoſe of the maſters, who, it is notorious decried and ridiculed both religion and morality with all the force and energy of their wit and ingenuity.—But if collateral evidence is neceſſary to prove my aſſertion, I ſay, that the very motion which was made in the Aſſembly upon the ſubject of religion demonſtrates it. "What mode of "worſhip ſhall be eſtabliſhed by law?" was the queſtion. Contrary to their views (which undoubtedly was, if poſſible, to have none at all, otherwiſe wherefore did they make the motion, when neither neceſſity, or the inſtructions of their conſtituents required it?) the decree paſſed in favor of the ancient religion. To counteract this, and in ſome meaſure to bring their favorite object to bear (at leaſt at a future period) they artfully procured an inadmiſſible oath to be adminiſtered to the paſtors of *that Church*, which they had decreed to be the *eſtabliſhed religion* of the realm. Thus at one ſtroke, they overthrew the ſpirit of the decree, for the oath makes ſuch an eſſential alteration in the very firſt principle of *that*

religion,

religion, which they had juſt declared to be the only ſyſtem of faith eſtabliſhed by law, that it no more reſembles it, (if I may ſay ſo) than it does that of Mahomet. It includes alſo a glaring contradiction. But contradictions coſt them little. We ſhall often ſee them guilty of the like impeachments on common ſenſe. Provided the ends are attained, no matter by what means.

Meſſieurs Mirabeau, Camus, and other partizans of infidelity plainly foreſaw the effects of the oath both upon the minds of the eccleſiaſtics and the people. Thus they had a double motive for tendering it. The firſt (as I ſaid) was to counteract the decree in favor of the ancient religion, and thus by degrees to force them to depart from their ancient faith, and adopt their latitudinarian principles. The other motive, as a neceſſary preliminary to the former, was to rid themſelves of the clergy, who are profeſſionally the ſupporters of religion, and conſequently would continually thwart and counteract their deſigns. They were fully convinced that the clergy could not take the oath, without abandoning their faith, and they argued very juſtly that when the ſhepherds were drove away, the flock would ſoon be diſperſed. In this

manner

manner they made the clergy odious in the eyes of the people, holding them forth as ſo many enemies to the conſtitution, and conſequently to liberty, for refuſing an oath, which deſtroyed the work of their own hands.

But our * gentleman contended that there was nothing injurious to the ancient faith of France in the aboveſaid oath. If this aſſertion is true, the non-juring-clergymen of that nation are indeed only a ſet of obſtinate and refractory prieſts, as they are conſtantly deſcribed in the democratic prints, who, under the cloak of religion, retain the moſt dangerous principles to civil liberty. Let us examine that oath in the ſcales of impartiality, and then we ſhall be able to judge whether according to the principles of the ancient faith (it is upon that ground, be pleaſed to obſerve that I argue) they could conſcientiouſly take the oath required. I do not pretend to ſay whether they did well, or ill. Every man

* Since the writing of this letter, he is however become a member of the Whig Club. Every man has undoubtedly a right to think on politics as he pleaſes. But it ſeems rather ſingular that a man who is requeſting favors of the miniſter, ſhould openly aſſociate with his avowed opponents.

has his own opinion. You will therefore judge for yourſelf in that reſpect.

I find by the firſt article, relative to their decrees in eccleſiaſtical matters, that the National Aſſembly, *upon its ſole omnipotence*, has aboliſhed fifty-three biſhopricks.

Art. 2d. *Upon its ſole authority*, it has deprived biſhops, though legally and canonically appointed, of all power, juriſdiction, and authority, and has intruded others into their reſpective ſees.

Art. 3d. In conſequence of this deprivation, all thoſe biſhops and the clergy are denounced by the National Aſſembly, diſturbers of the public peace, if they preſume to perform their reſpective functions.

Art. 4th. *Upon its ſole authority*, it has ſuppreſſed all the cathedral churches, and given to clergymen, *choſen by themſelves*, the epiſcopal juriſdiction in dioceſes during their vacancy. They have likewiſe intruded upon the biſhops a council, *of their own choice*, by whoſe advice they are to regulate all their proceedings in whatever relates to juriſdiction, &c.

Art. 5th. *By the plenitude of its unbounded authority*, it has aboliſhed all religious vows. This decree has a retractive operation.

Art.

Art. 6th. *By its own authority*, it delegates a power to the laity to chooſe their own paſtors without any interference of the biſhop or clergy, and wills that all the biſhops ſhall be choſen without any application whatever to the Pope. In the choice of biſhops, every man, though he be a Calviniſt, Jew, or Pagan (who certainly are no members of *that church eſtabliſhed by law*, and conſequently cannot have the leaſt religious intereſt in the choice) have a vote at all elections of the kind.

Art. 7th indeed acknowledges the Pope as viſible head of the Catholic Church, but abrogates all ſubmiſſion and dependence upon him whatever. Every biſhop, upon his inſtallment, ſhall write a civil and complimentary letter to him, but ſhall inſert nothing, which denotes any acknowledgement of primacy of juriſdiction, or dependence, as aboveſaid.

Art. 8th requires that every officiating prieſt ſhall take an oath to conform to theſe articles to the utmoſt of his power and ability; and whoſoever ſhall refuſe ſubmiſſion to this decree ſhall be declared *ipſo facto* incapable of performing any public function either at the time being, or hereafter *.

* It is nugatory to ſay that none of theſe articles are

Such are in a few words, as nearly as I can recollect (for I quote them from memory) the contents of the abovesaid decrees, to the observance of which the clergy are required to swear. We will now, with your leave, take a short view of a few of the arguments which the non-juring clergy make use of in their own defence, and the reasons they give for rejecting the oath required of them.

They alledge that before a man submits to take an oath, he ought to be incontrovertibly assured of the competence and the undoubted authority of the party, which proposes it. This, I believe, may be disputed upon very good grounds, as I shall show you hereafter. Another objection arises from the possibility that some of the articles proposed may tend to produce a schism (which indeed they have most effectually done) by introducing novelties into the discipline of the church; and finally that some of them may, and indeed do, militate against the ancient faith of France, which by an Act of the Assembly they have declared to be the only *established* religion of the land.

expressed in the oath required of the clergy, as they are all virtually implied in swearing to maintain the constitution in toto.

The

The whole National Aſſembly, they ſay, has been repeatedly called upon, as likewiſe the hireling-writers they employ for their own intereſted purpoſes, to prove that ſince the promulgation of the goſpel, any biſhoprick was either erected, enlarged, or curtailed by the civil magiſtrate *alone* in the Catholic Church, and that without the free concurrence of the eccleſiaſtical power. For according to the ancient canons, and more eſpecially according to the maxims of the Gallican Church, a national council is requiſite, in which each biſhop intereſted in the charge muſt give his formal conſent. The expreſs conſent of the king is likewiſe neceſſary, which can only be underſtood of a *free* conſent. And laſtly, according to the univerſal practice of *that church*, which they decreed to be *that of the ſtate*, the confirmation of the Pope has been deemed eſſentially requiſite.

The anſwer has not as yet been given. On the contrary it is a matter of fact that during the three firſt centuries, the church *alone* exerciſed that right. If in future ages we perceive a coalition between the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers, it was plainly intended for nothing more than a ſupport and protection for the latter. Whenever the people were

were called in at the elections of their prelates, it was with the view only of making them acquainted with the perſon who was to preſide over them in the ſpiritual line, and at the ſame time to learn if they had any well-founded objections againſt his perſon and character. Thus the National Aſſembly, in theſe two articles, is convicted of introducing an unheard of innovation, and of a palpable encroachment on the ſpiritual power beyond precedent or example in the Catholic Church.

The non-juring clergymen alledge that no biſhop can be deprived of his juriſdiction, unleſs he be convicted of ſome uncanonical fault, or by his voluntary ceſſion, or by death. Upon other grounds his expulſion has always been deemed the effect of violence and tyranny. Every function performed by an intruding biſhop, in the dioceſe of a living prelate, has uniformly been conſidered by all antiquity as null and void. There is ſcarcely a dioceſe in France at this moment, which has not been affected more or leſs in this manner by the decrees of the National Aſſembly.

The non-jurors contend that religious vows are ſanctioned by the evangelical counſels; and theſe, they add, are proved by certain warrant of ſcripture. To proſcribe then

ſuch

ſuch practices is both a ſcandal, and a ſacrilege. Be pleaſed to obſerve that I argue only according to the tenets of the ancient faith, which the National Aſſembly, by a late decree has adopted, and declared to be the *eſtabliſhed* faith of France.

A canonical miſſion, they ſay, has always been deemed the ſource of juriſdiction. Such perſons therefore who have had no other induction into the miniſtry, but what they received from the people, or the magiſtrates, have ever been held as intruders; or, as our bleſſed Saviour calls them, Thieves and Robbers, who have climbed over the fences of the ſheep-fold. The National Aſſembly, it is notorious, of its own *ſole* authority, appoints, inſtitutes, and gives juriſdiction to the clergy throughout France. From whence, for example, was the biſhop of Verſailles to derive his ſpiritual powers and juriſdiction, according to the doctrine of the ancient faith of France? From the Pope undoubtedly. But the Aſſembly will not have it ſo. From the biſhops then, whoſe dioceſes have been curtailed and parcelled out to make up this new biſhoprick? But they have no juriſdiction over his dioceſe, and therefore cannot confer upon

upon him what they do not poſſeſs themſelves.

The non-juring-clergymen declare that it is an article of the catholic faith, and conſequently of the ancient faith of France, that the biſhop of Rome has a primacy both of honor and juriſdiction over the *whole* church; a delegated power, as ſucceſſor of St. Peter, from heaven, of ſuperintending and governing the whole flock, both the paſtors and the people. The decree then of the French National Aſſembly which limits his authority to a bare letter of compliment, and prohibits all acknowledgment of his authority and juriſdiction in ſpirituals, is a direct rejection of an article of faith, and conſequently in catholic principles (were there no other objections to it) renders the oath *abſolutely* inadmiſſible.

At the moment that theſe unheard of doctrines in the Gallican church were moved, diſcuſſed and decreed, the biſhops made their appeal, and ſtood up for the faith and the rights of the church. At the ſame time they offered to unite with the Aſſembly in every propoſition for the good of the nation and of the people at large, provided they did not militate with their ſuperior duty, and on condition that they might be permitted to aſſem-

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ble in council, and act conjointly, for that purpoſe, in union with the Head and firſt Paſtor of the Catholic Church. Their petition was rejected. Thus the power of the keys which, they ſay, were given to churchmen *alone*, was now transferred into the hands of the laity. In this chaos and jumble of things, it is natural to ſuppoſe that the people know not what to believe, and conſequently will ſoon be melted down into the maſs of Deiſts, Atheiſts, &c. *the grand deſideratum* of the preſent French legiſlators. The effects of theſe pernicious doctrines have already been too viſible to need any further animadverſion upon them.

Permit me then to put the queſtion. All prejudices laid aſide, can any biſhop or prieſt, according to the principles of the ancient faith of France, as lately decreed to be the *eſtabliſhed* religion of that country, ſwear to maintain the civil conſtitution of the clergy, as I have ſtated it above? And in particular may not that gentleman, who ſtood up ſo warmly for the propriety of the oath, be aſked if in catholic principles, ſuch as I have ſtated them, it is poſſible that the clergy can, without perjuring themſelves, ſwear to its contents? If he ſays that the majority of the

articles regard only the diſcipline of the church, I ſhall not ſwell my letter to diſpute the caſe with him, though at the ſame time I deny a power in the ſtate to interfere in any of them, provided that they are confined to ſpirituals *alone*, without the concurrence of the eccleſiaſtical power, according to the ancient practice of the church, now decreed (as I have been obliged repeatedly to obſerve) the *eſtabliſhed* faith of the realm. But one of the aboveſaid articles (if he knows any thing of the tenets of the ancient Gallican church) militates moſt pointedly againſt it; and conſequently he who ſubſcribes to it, according to thoſe tenets, is no longer a member of the Catholic Church.

I took the liberty to mention to you that there were other radical defects, according to my ideas, in the preſent French legiſlation, than that of attempting to frame a government without religion and morality. Theſe are the decrees relative to the form of government, to the liberty and ſecurity of individuals, to property, and to the adminiſtration of juſtice, which are directly contradictory to the unanimous wiſh of the nation. On all theſe heads (as well as in that reſpecting the property of the clergy) the deputies have

acted contrary to the inſtructions and mandates of their conſtituents. Therefore, as I ſaid, the clergy may have reaſon to doubt of the competence of thoſe who formed the oath. You may read all theſe inſtructions in Monſieur de Calonne's excellent pamphlet *on the preſent and future ſtate of France*, to which I refer you, and then you will be able to judge for yourſelf.

I remain,

Dear SIR,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant, &c.

London,
Dec. 15th, 1791.

LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE heard it frequently ſaid (and indeed by yourſelf) that the abuſes both in church and ſtate were arrived to ſuch a pitch of turpitude in France, that a regeneration of both was a work of abſolute neceſſity. It was a work of ſuch magnitude and importance, as nothing leſs than the violent convulſion, ſuch as enſued, could poſſibly effect. Excuſe me if I differ in opinion from you. The remedy was at hand, had they choſen to apply it. Previous to any coercive meaſures taken by the democratic party, Louis XVI. manifeſted his generous ſentiments to the States-General in a declaration, which conſiſted of thirty-five articles. At the concluſion of his ſpeech, he delivered himſelf in the following, (I may add) gracious manner: "Without vanity, I may ſay that no mo-" narch, *of his own accord*, ever offered to do " more for his people, than myſelf. Indeed no

" no nation can deſerve it more eminently, " than that of the French." What was it he offered to do? To aboliſh all illegal taxes and loans; to reſtore, and give vigour to the finances; to curtail the expence of his own houſehold; to aboliſh all the pecuniary privileges, and exemptions of the clergy and nobility, beſides the abolition of all thoſe particular taxes, ſuch as the *gabelle* (the ſalt-tax) and many others which were odious and onerous to the people; to limit his own power reſpecting the future creation of nobility; to aboliſh the *lettres de cachet*; to grant the freedom of election, the liberty of the preſs, free trade, perſonal liberty, equal taxation, with many other voluntary conceſſions too long to enumerate *. Even Monſieur Necker himſelf declared (and he was the firſt miniſter of finance, and conſequently muſt have known the reſources of the nation) that if the payment of the taxes was duly enforced; a ſtrict œconomy obſerved; and a due attention paid to the receipt and the expenditure, the af-

* It is ſaid that theſe were fair promiſes, but they could not be depended upon. Why? Was the regenerating party the weaker for having the King on their ſide? Thus it is evidently proved that their views extended further than the reformation of abuſes.

fairs

fairs of the nation might undoubtedly be retrieved.

Inſtead of proceeding in that peaceable and tranquil manner, which might have been expected from any other deſcription of men, they ſought a remedy to the evils of the ſtate, more congenial to their own intereſted views, by levelling the whole ſyſtem at once. One of the greateſt grievances that country laboured under, aroſe from the dilapidated ſtate of the finances. Has the late convulſion adminiſtered a remedy to that evil? The debt which had only increaſed to three thouſands of millions of livres in one whole century before the revolution, has been increaſed ſince that period to twelve hundred and fifty-five millions. Has this convulſion done away thoſe illegal impriſonments, formerly known under the name of *Lettres de Chachet?* The name, if you pleaſe, they have aboliſhed, but not the evil. For there have been more of theſe extra-judicial orders iſſued within fifteen months after the revolution, than for the fifteen years that preceded it. By a decree of the National Aſſembly all thoſe who had been detained in any of thoſe manſions of woe and deſolation, called ſtate-priſons, by the

the former government, were liberated *. But ought they not, at the ſame time, to have paid ſome attention to the cauſes of their impriſonment, and not indiſcriminately to diſcharge them without ſuch inquiry? For in many inſtances their detention in thoſe places of durance was as great a ſtretch of arbitrary and deſpotic power, *in another ſenſe*, as if they had been confined merely at the caprice and pleaſure of a king or a miniſter of ſtate. For according to *ſtrict law and juſtice* many of theſe culprits had forfeited their lives, and ought to have undergone capital puniſhments for their crimes. It is a well-known fact that the old government in every reſpect, except that of diſtreſſing the people for the payment of the taxes, was very ſlack in its penal purſuits. The *Lettres de Cachet* then were not (at that period at leaſt) ſo much an outrage to humanity, as an abuſe of juſtice. Beſides how can the preſent rulers impeach the former government of crimes, and

* In the Baſtile only ſix or ſeven perſons were found immured. Three or four of theſe were ideots, and in conſequence were conveyed to a proper place deſtined to receive ſuch miſerable objects. The others had been confined for forgery, and in juſtice ought to have been hanged.

with

with an abuſe, of which they themſelves connive, and wink at? Frequently when the populace have proceeded to exceſs and violence, either by confining, or tearing to pieces ſuch perſons as have been unfortunately the objects of their rage and diſpleaſure, did the Aſſembly attend impartially to the informations laid before them? Did they not receive ſuch ſavage intelligence with apathy and indifference? Charles Lameth, in particular, one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed democrates of the whole band, uſed jeſtingly to ſay, "Gentlemen, theſe are only the reports "of the day, which prove that the people "will always have the upper hand." But might not the ſame thing have been ſaid of the abuſive power of the *Lettres de Cachet* under the former government? They were only the reports of the day, in which the king, or his miniſters are ſure to have the upper hand; with this difference only, that the people are the worſt of tyrants. They fear not to be dethroned. In their fury and madneſs they make no diſtinction of perſons. They ſuſpend on the ſame fatal lantern both the prince and the baker. The people are the moſt dangerous, and the moſt to be dreaded of all deſpots. I do not mean to condemn however

however the ſuppreſſion of the *Lettres de Cachet*. They did well to ſuppreſs them, but they ſhould not have transferred that abuſive and extrajudicial power into worſe hands. Had they not flattered the people however to exceſs, and blinded them with ideas of their own importance, the deſigning party could never have attained their ends. Their flattery to them was conſequently as groſs, as their politics in employing ſuch an engine was unſound. I will give you a few inſtances of it.

Meſſieurs Malet and Vignerot (heretofore Count de Lameth, and Duke d'Aguillon) feigning to believe that the peaſants had ſet fire to their country-houſes, declared that "the only thing they dreaded was the poſſi-"bility that thoſe *good people* had burnt their "fingers in the tranſaction." The Duke d'Aguillon, in particular, has oftentimes been heard to ſay, that "if any Frenchman was "to offer to aſſaſſinate him, he believes he "ſhould not offer to defend himſelf, for fear "of encroaching on the liberty of a citizen." Theſe are ſuch puerile anecdotes, ſuch inſults upon common ſenſe, ſuch fulſome adulation, and impoſition on the people, that I

am almoſt aſhamed to relate them. It proves however that French levity ſtill ſubſiſts; and that with ſuch ideas, the nation is ſtill very unfit for freedom. One of the firſt acts of the Aſſembly was evidently in favor of the *majority of the people:* at leaſt ſo the people underſtood it, who are ſeldom blind to their own intereſts. On the 6th of July, the Aſſembly aboliſhed all the exiſting taxes as illegal. But in the mean time, "not to create "confuſion in the ſtate," they declared "that "they ſhould be levied for a ſtated time." The people underſtood the firſt part of the decree, but cloſed their ears againſt the ſecond. Hence, in a great meaſure, ariſe all the pecuniary misfortunes of that country. Hence is the amazing *deficit* between the receipt and expenditure to be accounted for. No wonder indeed it ſhould be ſo, if the report be true that the latter is eſtimated at forty-eight millions of livres per month, and the former only amounts to ſixteen millions of the ſaid currency. The taxes were evaded or refuſed in every part of the kingdom, and eſpecially the ſalt-tax, which, of all others, was moſt productive.

I now return once more to the *Lettres de Cachet.* All exaggerations laid aſide, from the

the year 1475 to the preſent revolution (this ſtatement be pleaſed to obſerve is taken from the pen of an enemy to the former government) we do not find three hundred impriſonments in conſequence of them for the ſpace of three hundred and fifteen years, including the moſt tempeſtuous times of the monarchy, and during the adminiſtration of the moſt arbitrary and deſpotic miniſters. In the laſt half century we ſcarcely can find more impriſonments by order of the ſovereign, than have taken place within a year and half by order of the Aſſembly, or by the committee of *reſearch*, and of the municipalities, of which it has the direction. That committee of *reſearch*, in particular, is one of the moſt iniquitous of all inquiſitorial tribunals. They attend to every information, either real or ſuppoſed, againſt their enemies, and proſecute them to the utmoſt extremity in conſequence of it. But when their own partiſans have been denounced, and their guilt proved, they have either lent a deaf ear to the accuſation; or, if they deigned to take notice of it, they ſuffered the delinquents to remain unpuniſhed.

Yet I readily allow that the Aſſembly has done away ſome of the abuſes of the former

government. At the ſame time however I muſt alſo declare that the *majority* of the members (I do not mean as to numbers, but as to influence, under the auſpices of the *majeſty of the people*) had from the very firſt moment no other view than that of levelling the whole fabric to the ground. Their decree on the *rights of man* is a ſufficient proof of my aſſertion. It muſt ſeem extraordinary that any legiſlators ſhould be found ſo completely ignorant of the nature and diſpoſitions of mankind, as to inform the people of their rights, without at the ſame time impreſſing on their minds the duties they lie under as members of ſociety. At that moment ſurely the members muſt have thought themſelves ſeated in Noah's ark; that on the ſubſiding of the waters, the whole earth belonged to them, which they were at liberty to portion out as they pleaſed. In conſequence of this deluſion, they proclaimed that "all men are born free, "and ought to remain ſo;" that "one man "is no greater than another;" with many other poſitions of the ſame curious nature. On this great event, they congratulated each other with having been the firſt people to reveal principles, which (ſarcaſtically) they ſaid ought to have been the baſis of the Engliſh

conſti-

conſtitution, as ſettled at the Revolution in 1688. But I ſuppoſe our anceſtors had not ſufficient wit and penetration to make ſuch a rare diſcovery!

Nevertheleſs politicians might aſk them a few troubleſome queſtions. As for example, Are men to be governed by theories, and metaphyſical ſubtleties? Is experience, and the practice of ages to be held of no account? Are we to confound the ſavage with the ſocial man? natural independence, with civil liberty? We may as well ſay, that as men are born naked, ſo they ought to remain, as to declare that becauſe all men are born free, ſo likewiſe they ought to continue. Men however, though born naked, live clothed; as they, though born free, live ſubjected to the laws. Clothes indeed confine and ſtraighten a little the motion of the body, but they ſhelter and defend it from the inclemency of the weather, and many other exterior inconveniencies. Laws alſo cramp the paſſions, but they protect the honor, the lives and property of men. To ſpeak therefore correctly, we ought to diſtinguiſh between liberty and independence. The former conſiſts in obeying the laws, which are enacted for our ſecurity and preſervation; whereas the latter abſolutely

lutely implies a life ſimilar to that of a wild beaſt, which is configned to the woods. This ſubject reminds me of a very ſenſible anſwer, which a Venetian ambaſſador made to a perſon who charged his countrymen with being ſlaves. "It is true," replied the ambaſſador, "we are ſlaves to our laws; and it is from "that reverence which we pay to them, that "our liberty reſults. Thoſe people are only "free, who pay due obedience to the laws; "and the more they ſupport, and give vigour "to them, the greater freedom they enjoy." It muſt therefore appear ſtrange to the whole civilized world that the National Aſſembly ſhould adopt a code, even in appearance (for there is no reality in it, but to throw duſt in the eyes of the people) which in the execution muſt introduce every thing that is baneful to ſociety.

But vanity, as well as fear, directed all their actions. They had ſet on the populace to deſtroy monarchy and all its appendages, and were fearful, when they adjourned their Houſe to Paris, they ſhould themſelves become the victims of the evil ſpirit they themſelves had conjured up. Hence ſo many decrees upon the inviolability of their perſons, and declaring it high treaſon to accuſe any member

member without the ſpecial leave and permiſſion of the Houſe.

At the ſame time that they took ſuch wiſe precautions for their perſonal ſecurity, they did not neglect their pecuniary intereſt. They ſettled among themſelves the amount of that ſtipend, to which they conceived they were entitled, for the labours they undertook for the public good. This they ſtated at twenty-four livres per day, including the days of their arrival and departure from Paris, as likewiſe five livres each poſt for travelling expences. By a decree, they authorized Monſieur Necker to pay ſix months of this ſaid ſtipend to every member in advance. This article alone, without the addition of many other concomitant expences, amounts to ſeveral millions in the year. What muſt appear ſtill more ſurpriſing in this tranſaction, is that the ſame Monſieur Necker, who was called the *tutelar angel* of France, was obliged to advance this ſtipend at the very time, that they refuſed him a loan of thirty millions for the preſſing neceſſities of the ſtate. How different was the conduct of the States-General in 1614. The deputies of that Aſſembly refuſed all pecuniary emoluments, thinking them-

themſelves highly gratified by being appointed to ſerve their country. But the preſent legiſlative body, when applied to for the poor, (now bereft of all ſupport by the deſtruction of the clergy and the religious houſes), with a ſmall part of their ſalaries, immediately broke forth into murmurs, and exhibited the moſt evident ſymptoms of indignation and diſcontent. In conſequence thereof, they immediately called for the order of the day.

If the National Aſſembly had attended only to remedy abuſes, it had done well. But many of theſe abuſes, were they ſtill of a greater magnitude, did not bring that death and deſtruction to the ſtate, which it has experienced ſince the revolution. One of the commiſſaries, employed by the Aſſembly to ſuperintend the *Caiſſe Deſcompte*, informed them that ſince the decree which ordered that the *Caiſſe Deſcompte* ſhould in future be paid in *aſſignats*, that is in paper-money, they had been obliged to procure ſpecie from Holland and Spain at the enormous diſcount of ſixteen and eighteen per cent to anſwer the demands made on it.

It may be aſked, what is become of the crown-pieces and other ſilver coin which here-

heretofore were ſo plentifully ſeen in France? of the patriotic donations they received? of the money coined, for immediate uſe and preſſing neceſſity, from the king's plate, which he ſent to the mint for that purpoſe? Not a *louis d'or* to be ſeen, or to be had, if not bought at more than one fourth of it's value. What are become of the revenues of the church, and of the ſpoils of the ſanctuary? I believe at this moment, ſuch queſtions would puzzle the moſt ſpeculative revolutioniſt. Yet they have the aſſurance to publiſh to all the world that "it is ſufficient for Frenchmen only to know "their wants, to find their reſources at hand."

What is become of their trade, which has ſo rapidly decreaſed, if it is not totally annihilated by their commercial treaty with this country? This treaty has been one of the greateſt evils which France has experienced. Why did they not apply their regenerating hands towards the expunging of that evil? The trade from the port of Bourdeaux alone has fallen ſhort by two thouſand five hundred veſſels. At Lyons all the manufactures are at a ſtand. Their potteries are totally ruined by the ſuperiority of our Staffordſhire ware: their cottons, &c. by Mancheſter. In Nor-

mandy ſeveral thouſands of people are there-by deſtitute of bread, and conſequently ſtarving. Here was a mighty ſcope for their regenerating principles, if ſuch they had adopted in ſincerity of heart! yet, without money, without trade, and without an ally (for France has loſt Sweden, Pruſſia, the Porte, Holland, Poland, the Princes of the Empire, and her allies in the Eaſt-Indies) ſhe dares to bully the Emperor. With us ſhe dares not *openly* to quarrel, though the commercial treaty, as I have ſaid, corrodes the very vitals of the country. But ſhe ſends her dark emiſſaries among us, with the ſame view that they were diſpatched to Avignon, Geneva, Berne, &c. &c. If Tom Paine, whom I look upon to be one of her *ſable ambaſſadors*, and who was aſſociated with that party which were for deſtroying the king of France after his capture at Varennes, for which purpoſe he publiſhed a pamphlet called the Republican; if Tom Paine, I ſay, was to preſide at a tribunal in America or France, and ſit in judgment upon any raſh fellow of reverſe principles to thoſe which he has ſo daringly publiſhed in this country, I aſk of him what his fate would be? He would ſoon be deſervedly ſuſpended

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on the fatal lantern. A further diſcuſſion on the clergy, I will leave for another letter, having already made this too long; when I hope to ſhew you the true cauſe of their deſtruction, as well as of the overthrow of royalty.

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your ever obilged humble ſervant.

London,
Feb. 18th, 1792.

LETTER VI.

DEAR SIR,

THERE can be no doubt, at leaſt with thoſe who have any knowledge of human nature, that the opulence of the French clergy was the true and genuine cauſe of their ruin and deſtruction. It was the glare of that fatally reſplendent metal, which ſo often makes men commit great crimes, that excited the envy, and inſtigated the rapacity of a great portion of the nation. Like our Henry VIII, as Biſhop Godwin ſays, they "were ſtrongly "diſpoſed to promote a reformation that "would turn *the penny*, and furniſh the Ex-"chequer." For which purpoſe, "it was "thought neceſſary to leſſen the reputation "of thoſe they meant to oppreſs." This is Mr. Collier's remark. I muſt confeſs that I feel a ſingular ſatisfaction in appealing to the writings of ſuch men, whoſe liberality, candour, and ſuperior love of truth ſtood paramount to their own, and the prejudices of the

the times they lived in. Their arguments, though on tranſactions ſo remote, are equally applicable to the late proceedings in France. "If degeneracy and miſbehaviour," as Mr. Collier obſerves, "were the grand motive of "their diſſolution, why were they not put "under better management? Why had they "not ſome trial for reformation? If unne-"ceſſary expence, if luxury and licentiouſ-"neſs are good reaſons to change the owner, "and determine the eſtate, if this will hold, "we ſhall have ſtrange transferring of titles." It is not therefore the poſſeſſion, but the abuſe of riches which is criminal.

To ſay that many individuals among the clergy never miſapplied their revenues, or lived in no reſpect derogatory to the ſanctity of their profeſſion, would be too groſs an adulation. They are men as well as their neighbours, and conſequently ſubject to the infirmities of human nature. But if we attend to the generality of facts, it will appear that their frequent gratuitous contributions to the ſupport of the ſtate, and their extenſive charities to the poor (for which deſcription of unhappy men there has been as yet no proviſion in France) were ſuch as did honour to their patriotiſm, and credit to the duties of their ſtation.

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In the courſe of the war of 1741 they gave 54,000,000 of livres in the ſpace of ſeven years. That is, 12,000,000 in 1742——15,000,000 in 1745——11,000,000 in 1747, and 16,000,000 in 1748. In the ſame proportion they have aſſiſted the ſtate ever ſince; and at this criſis (the revolution) they offered from 24 to 26,000,000 to ſupport the ſinking credit of their country.

I ſhall not attempt, could I poſſibly do it, to enumerate their extenſive charities during the preſent æra, becauſe it might be deemed a ſpecies of adulation to the living, who are *ſolo Deo teſte contenti*, and ſeek not the praiſes of men. But without the imputation of that reproach, I may venture to name a few of their predeceſſors, who within the preſent century have departed this life. We ſhall find that they diſpoſed of their revenues in a manner that baffles all cenſure and reproach. M. Saleon, archbiſhop of Vienne, gave the entire revenues of his biſhoprie to the poor, and lived totally upon the produce of his family-income, the half of which likewiſe was employed in charity.

M. de Janſon, archbiſhop of Arles, out of 45,000 livres per annum which his biſhoprick yielded, he reſerved only 15,000 to himſelf, and

and beſtowed the reſt for the ſupport of many honeſt and worthy families who were in a ſtate of penury and indigence.—M. de Rochebonne, biſhop of Carcaſſonne, lived, in his own perſon, as poor as the moſt indigent of thoſe for whoſe ſupport he expended all his revenues.—M. de Morenville, biſhop of Chartres, for many years expended almoſt his whole income to defray the extraordinary expences of the hoſpitals. Theſe are but few of the many inſtances I could produce in favor of the charitable deeds of thoſe illuſtrious perſons, who are now no more. What numbers of valuable citizens, and how many poor families muſt have periſhed without their aid and aſſiſtance!

Yet I will allow that large ſums of money were expended by theſe great perſonages, as well as by the ſuperior clergy of the preſent day, upon the parade and ceremony, which the dignity of their reſpective ſtations required. But ſuch appendages are as neceſſary as the crown on the king's head, the judge's great wig, or the mace carried before the mayor on ſolemn occaſions. There muſt be ſomething to ſtrike the eye and the imagination of the people. One glance at ſuch dignified objects ſpeaks more forcibly to the minds

minds of men than all the ſermons or orations that ever were preached, or pronounced. Horace made this remark above eighteen hundred years ago, and experience has confirmed it. "Segnius irritant animos demiſſa "per aurem, quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta, "fidelibus," are his words. A magiſtracy without its formalities, like a form of worſhip, diveſted of all exterior pomp and ceremony, would, according to Monteſquieu, be ſoon conſigned to the regions of the moon.

As I obſerved before, it muſt be confeſſed that there were many relaxed clergymen in France, (ſuch in particular as enjoyed great benefices) whoſe conduct and morals did not coincide with the duties and ſanctity of their profeſſion; yet it does not prove that they were all indiſcriminately corrupt, and that, to remedy the evil, it was neceſſary to pull down the whole fabric, becauſe ſome of the component parts were decayed and rotten. Why pull up the good corn with the tares? Why had they not ſome trial for reformation? as Mr. Collier remarks. Yet "the "overbalance of merit," according to the obſervation of the aboveſaid gentleman on the reign of Henry VIII. and which is equally applicable to our preſent ſubject, "could not

"divert

" divert the calamity, nor preſerve them from
" ruin. Thus we ſee how much the mercies
" of God are greater than thoſe of men.
" Juſtice below is ſometimes blind upon my-
" ſterious motives, ſtrikes without diſtinction,
" and ſweeps away the innocent with the
" guilty."

When I mentioned the *beneficed* clergy, I did not mean to include the rectors, vicars, or other parochial paſtors who were veſted with the cure of ſouls. Theſe, I may venture to ſay, have uniformly merited the approbation of all who knew them. The *beneficed* clergy, ſuch as archdeacons, deans, prebends, &c. might not however think themſelves bound to ſuch ſtrict diſcipline as the more immediate agents in the miniſtry of the church; and therefore might poſſibly conceive that the intention of the founders was to provide a genteel ſubſiſtence for gentlemen, which their family circumſtances would not admit of, upon certain conditions of keeping choir, and ſuch like. The genteel and decent manner in which our archdeacons, deans and prebends generally live in this country undoubtedly ſanctions my opinion. They live like gentlemen, not forgetting the obligations of their profeſſion. Thoſe who live

otherwiſe, be they French, or of any other nation, moſt undoubtedly defeat the intention of the founders. They ought to be reformed, but not annihilated; for every candid perſon muſt allow that ſuch foundations are liberal, and uſeful in every civilized country.

It cannot be ſuppoſed that the clergy in France were always as opulent, as they have been of late years. They had indeed cultivated the eſtates, which were bequeathed to the Church, with care and aſſiduity; many of them, I may ſay, from barren waſtes. In all the petty wars during the feudal ſyſtem, the lands of the Church were generally held ſacred; and as the owners were not engaged in theſe broils and diſputes, they uniformly attended to the culture and improvement of them. Living likewiſe ſo much within the income of their revenues, they had always money at command for that purpoſe, as alſo to aſſiſt the ſtate with ſubſidies, whenever they were required of them. "It is not to be "denied," ſays Mr. Collier, but they were "ſome of the beſt landlords." (Whoever has been in France muſt have made the ſame obſervation; viz. that the tenants of the Church were the moſt at their eaſe of any ſet

of

of people in that country.) "Their reſerved "rents were low, and fines eaſy; and ſome-"times the produce of their farms, without "paying money, diſcharged their tenants in a "great meaſure." Add to this, their lands muſt have riſen in proportion to the increaſe of money, and conſequently in value to the reſt of the kingdom. Hence all their riches, which, till it is incontrovertibly proved otherwiſe (and this has not as yet been done to ſatisfaction) were moſt equitably and juſtly acquired in the moſt rigid ſenſe of the word.

Many of the donations made to the Church were to eſtabliſh aſylums and places of retreat for perſons of ſuperior birth of both ſexes, who either choſe to withdraw from the world, or were not able to ſupport their dignity in it. As I remarked before, many of what are called the *beneficed* clergy, in my humble opinion, come under this deſcription. "Here," ſays Mr. Collier, "they "were furniſhed with the conveniences for "life and ſtudy, with opportunities for "thought and recollection, and over and "above paſſed their time in a condition not "unbecoming their quality." For they were not precluded from the free intercourſe of

their friends and acquaintances. In many of the female retreats eſpecially they made no vows of celibacy, and therefore might quit them, and marry whenever inclination or opportunity occurred.

The clergy had ſeminaries for learning and the inſtruction of youth in almoſt every town and city, where they taught without fee or reward. Had it not been for this uſeful body of men, the people might have remained for ever in the ſame profound ignorance in France, as pervaded Europe, in what is generally called the dark ages. "The clergy," as Mr. Collier obſerves, "promoted a gene-"ral improvement: they were very induſ-"trious in reſtoring learning, and retrieving "the country from the remarkable ignorance "of thoſe times." They attended the ſick and dying; particularly a ſet of women known by the name of *Les Sœurs griſes* (Grey Siſters) who, without any gratification whatever, attended night and day in the hoſpitals, and performed every act of charity and humanity towards the miſerable objects of thoſe manſions, regardleſs of their own feelings and the repugnancy of human nature to ſuch diſguſting and loathſome offices. Contraſt theſe with the mercenary women and nurſes who

attend in our hoſpitals. The clergy, on their part, were not leſs zealous and aſſiduous to comfort the ſick, and prepare the dying objects to merit that bliſs which is held out to thoſe who die in the Lord. Other religious men devoted their whole lives to procure the emancipation of thoſe unfortunate people who had fallen into the hands of the Barbary Corſairs. The convents, beſides the unbounded charities they gave to the diſtreſſed, furniſhed the ſick gratuitouſly with drugs and medicines of all kinds. In fine the Church maintained all the poor, and did innumerable acts of charity, which (if properly known, and duly conſidered) would for ever ſilence the tongue of ſlander and malevolence.—I have ſaid thus much on this ſubject upon a double motive. The firſt, with the view of doing ſome little juſtice to the parties concerned; and ſecondly, to conform to Mr. Tanner's advice in his preface to *Notitia eccleſiaſtica*, himſelf a proteſtant, " that it would be but " common juſtice to infuſe a better opinion " of monaſteries into the generality of pro- " teſtants." Poſſibly on a future occaſion I may ſpeak more largely on that ſubject.

Does not natural equity and juſtice then require that ſome balance ſhould be ſtruck between

between the real and eſſential ſervices which the clergy of all denominations have certainly rendered to the community, and the relaxed morals of ſome individuals of that body of men? To draw general concluſions from particular facts is the height of injuſtice.

Nothing, in my poor opinion, can be a more authentic proof or teſtimony of their real merits, than the accumulated maſs of calumny and abuſe which has been thrown upon them; only calculated indeed for the ears of the vulgar; and it is them alone the intereſted party are ſtudious to deceive. Without the *majeſty of the people*, the faction would be without power or energy. If the clergy however were a paſſive and ignorant body, without a will to perſuade, or talents to enforce; without opulence to excite envy and to tempt the hand of avarice, they might have remained in perfect peace and tranquility for ever. But having ſhewn themſelves equally the inflexible opponents of atheiſm and irreligion, (I ſpeak of the generality of the clergy, be pleaſed to obſerve, and I appeal to the many excellent replies which they have made to Voltaire, Rouſſeau, &c. &c.) as well as the prudent and attentive managers of their revenues,

venues, (hence their great increaſe of riches) they were devoted to ruin and deſtruction.

It is a groſs impoſition to ſuppoſe that the ſale of their domains will liquidate the national debt, were they honeſtly and judiciouſly applied for that purpoſe. It is even reported, with confidence, that they will not ſuffice for the maintenance of their penſioned clergy. This, I believe, they evidently perceived themſelves; and their impoſing the oath on all churchmen was the only remedy they could adminiſter to the evil. By this manœuvre they made a conſiderable ſaving, having reduced above three fourths of that order; otherwiſe, by the confeſſion of their own committees, that deducting the tithes, which they have now aboliſhed, the remainder of the eccleſiaſtical revenues would not be ſufficient for that purpoſe. It would exceed, they ſay, above fifty millions of livres, if the debts of the clergy, which they contracted for the ſupport of the ſtate, and which their ſudden diſſolution prevented them from cancelling, are included. But from ſuch men as have ſhewn a pointed diſregard for all religion, what had the clergy to expect? In the Aſſembly, the majority were either Atheiſts, Deiſts, or at beſt totally indifferent about the matter.

matter. From ſuch a groupe, can we ſuppoſe any quarter would be given to the ancient eſtabliſhment? Beſides the injuſtice and iniquity of the proceeding, the Aſſembly behaved undoubtedly with unparalleled ingratitude towards that unfortunate claſs of men. The latter had joined them in ſupport of the revolution, and were received as the ſaviours of the ſtate. But when this purpoſe was anſwered, they turned their backs upon them, and voted their deſtruction, regardleſs of the important ſervices they rendered them in the critical moment.

But let us not talk of ingratitude when ſuch flagrant injuſtice ſtares us in the face on all ſides. Every invective, every calumny that could poſſibly debaſe and depreciate their characters in the eyes of the people, was thrown out againſt them. I have now ſome of thoſe *elegant* periods of modern philoſophy before me, and will tranſcribe a few out of the many thouſands that have been launched againſt that defenceleſs body of men. The few ſpecimens I ſhall give you will be an inconteſtible evidence of the turpitude and baſeneſs of their minds, and of the rancour of their hearts.

Voltaire

Voltaire, the patriarch of infidelity, and advocate for every ſpecies of immorality, in his philoſophical dictionary, as it is called, (Art. Abbè) inveighs againſt the epiſcopal order in the following manner. "You do "perfectly well, Gentlemen,—Take the whole "earth to yourſelves. Undoubtedly it be-"longs to ſuch intriguing men, as can get "poſſeſſion of it. "You have not been idle "in the days of ignorance, ſuperſtition, and "folly, to deprive us of our inheritances, nor "to tread us under foot, and to fatten your-"ſelves on that, which ſhould have been ap-"propriated to the ſubſiſtence of the poor "and the diſtreſſed." In another place addreſſing himſelf to the people, he tells them "to beware of adhering to a worſhip (the "chriſtian religion) for the ſake of a pack of "*blackguards (gredins)* whoſe only merit con-"ſiſts in ignorance, ſuperſtition, and filth" *(craſſe)*,—(Indeed I find myſelf totally unequal to give the literal tranſlation of ſuch low, vulgar, and indecent language; yet I am forced to wade through it) "and whoſe only "glory, he adds, is concentered in idleneſs "and raſcality." Such language confutes itſelf, and is beneath the notice of every rational being. Yet unfortunately it has had its

effect, and overturned both the church and ſtate of France. Among the many miſchiefs attendant on the diſſolution of the former, the poor, who were heretofore fed and relieved in all their neceſſities by that body of men, are now thrown upon the mercy of the nation. Should they find it expedient to make a proviſion for them hereafter, the charge will be as ſeverely felt, as the pariſh-rates for that purpoſe are at this moment in England, and no doubt but they will be as ill provided for. I mean by overſeers, church-wardens, &c.

They alledge (the Aſſembly I mean) that the eccleſiaſtical domains are to be ſold to ſatisfy the creditors of the ſtate. But are not the clergy equally the creditors of the ſtate? Did they not take to the miniſtry, and dedicate their lives and their labours to the good of their fellow-citizens upon the public faith? A great portion of the clergy had voluntarily relinquiſhed their own patrimony, and took to the Church for the ſame beneficent end. Theſe men moſt certainly placed their confidence likewiſe in the public faith for the emoluments which were annexed to their functions. Being fitted by education and habit for theſe purpoſes alone, they were unequal to the means of getting their bread in other profeſſions.

profeſſions. Why then was ſuch injuſtice to be done to them, and ſuch partiality ſhewn to a pack of uſurers. Such I call the creditors of the ſtate, who never lent any thing in ſupport of it but upon the moſt intereſted motives. Can it poſſibly be ſuppoſed, if ever the ſame defalcation ſhould happen again in France, that theſe miſcreants will gratuitouſly offer the millions for the ſupport of the ſtate, as the clergy have ſo frequently done? Say—Is humanity and patriotiſm the characteriſtic of a uſurer? But what ſecurity has the preſent remnant of the clergy for the payment of their ſtipends? *The word*, they tell you, *of the Aſſembly*. It may be aſked, how can the Aſſembly, in its preſent ſituation, make its promiſes good to them? They have ſeized the revenues of the Church to pay the creditors of the ſtate. What will they ſeize upon to pay the ſervice of the Church, in caſe they cannot fulfil their engagements? It is a well known fact that the people have already in ſeveral inſtances refuſed to pay the taxes, which the Aſſembly has decreed, (hence the enormous deficit between the receipt and the expenditure) what then have theſe ſtipendary prieſts to expect? They have the pledge indeed of the Aſſembly. *Vox, et preterea nihil!*—As the Abbè Sayes

obſerved " it would have been leſs cruel to " have murdered them all at once."

Surely ſome medium might have been adopted to ſuccour the ſtate with their property, as far as it would go, without ſtripping them all at once of their ſubſiſtence, and conſequently depriving them of all the comforts of life? Why might they not have been permitted to drop off by degrees, each incumbent enjoying his benefice to his death, and at that period to ſink into the public fund? Such a gradual extinction of benefices, ſo congenial to the laws of nature and humanity, would have given a degree of credit to the Aſſembly, which they are now far from poſſeſſing. It would have been a palliative to ſo great a ſtretch of power, and would not have deprived the clergy of their preſent ſubſiſtence. But inſtead of conforming, even in ſo ſmall a degree, to the dictates of equity and juſtice, they added inſult to oppreſſion, a ſpecies of cruelty peculiar to themſelves. In a ſtrain of irony they cloſed their decree againſt the clergy in the following words: " That church- " men being now diſengaged from all the in- " cumbrances of the world, would be able " henceforth to attain, without obſtruction, to " the perfection of evangelical purity."

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It has been ſaid (I have taken the following remarks from Mr. Calonne's excellent pamphlet on the preſent and future ſtate of France) that "the clergy are only uſufructuaries." Doubtleſs. Of the property which the body of the clergy collectively poſſeſſes, its members individually have only the uſufruct: but is not the uſufruct to be placed among the number of inviolable poſſeſſions? We are only uſufructuaries of life, but that is no reaſon we ſhould be deprived of it.

"The clergy have no property." How ſo? Does a legal poſſeſſion, held without diſpute during a long ſucceſſion of ages, differ in law from real property? Surely the lands which have been given and legally tranſmitted to the clergy by thoſe to whom they appertained, and which they have cleared, improved and increaſed in value to a hundred times the original worth, and in which they have been confirmed in the poſſeſſion, do appertain to them as proprietors? In whom did the right reſide, during this immemorial poſſeſſion? *In the Nation.* That is *nobody*; for what appertains to all, appertains to none. The founders endowed theſe houſes for *public* benefit, they did not give them to the *public.* They aſſigned them for the ſervice of religion, and

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the relief of the poor. The public can have no other concern than to ſee they are applied to the uſes propoſed. And if the Nation chuſes to take this property, ought it not to revert to its ſource, and return to the heirs of the donors? So far M. Calonne.

But *might* overcomes *right*. And it is in vain to argue with thoſe who have power in hand, and iniquity at heart. "Id enim eſt "æquius, ſays Tacitus, quod eſt fortius."

You know that I am neither a Frenchman, or of the clergy, and therefore cannot have the *leaſt* intereſt in what I have ſaid. The force of truth, as it appears to me, and that equity and juſtice, which is due to all mankind, alone has rouzed my zeal, and compelled me to deliver my ſentiments with that honeſt freedom which becomes a Briton. Was any other deſcription of men treated with that indignant cruelty which the French clergy have experienced, I ſhould think my pains well beſtowed if I could reſcue them from contempt and obloquy, even in the eyes of one individual.—I now paſs over to the King.

By all parties Lewis XVI. is allowed to be a *good* man. No great character however for a prince, whatever it may be for an individual; particularly for a prince who had ſuch

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an artful, reſtleſs and intriguing nation to govern. A *good* prince, taken according to the common acceptation of the word, and a *weak* prince, in a political ſenſe are nearly ſynonimous terms. Far be it however from me to detract in the leaſt from the merit, which his goodneſs of heart entitles him to. In a private perſon it would be invaluable, and ſtill more ſo in a prince, when united with political knowledge and firmneſs of diſpoſition.

Without theſe requiſites, nothing but ruin and deſolation is likely to enſue. Lewis XVI. affords a melancholy inſtance of the truth of my aſſertion. This innate goodneſs of heart, this unſuſpecting temper, compliant diſpoſition, and inexperienced mind which the king poſſeſſes had long been abuſed by court paraſites and flatterers. Theſe excellent qualities in the king were likewiſe made ſubſervient to the baſeſt purpoſes by thoſe without doors; in other words, by the intriguing and deſigning part of the nation. Hence we may diſcover almoſt the very root and ſource of the revolution. For though he was frequently informed by ſeveral perſons, who wiſhed him well, that certain men were openly endeavouring to corrupt the army, and ſeduce the people from their duty and allegiance, whom they

they were haranguing daily in the *Palais royal* for that purpoſe, and at the ſame time bribing them with that ſhining metal, which few people can reſiſt, he either affected not to believe the information, or gave himſelf no concern to remedy the evil. Like our King James I. who remarked, when clad in unwieldy armour under which he could ſcarcely move, that *he could hurt nobody, and that nobody could hurt him*; ſo, it may be ſuppoſed Lewis XVI. argued. He meant no harm to any body, therefore could not ſuſpect that any body intended harm towards him. M. Turgot, his miniſter, however aſſured him that if he did not keep a watchful eye upon the evil machinations of certain people, his reign would prove as diſaſtrous to the French nation, as that of his predeceſſor Charles VI. The king was rouſed at this information, and ſeemed either hurt, or offended at it. M. Maurepas, to whom he told it in confidence, turned it off in a joke, laughed at it, and wanted the king to do as much. From theſe premiſes we may doubt, whatever his majeſty's education might have been in other reſpects, whether he was ever let into the ſecret of his own conſequence and importance. His actions do not ſeem to indicate it. The firſt letters he ever wrote with

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his own hand, after he aſcended the throne, were to a young man who had the care and management of his locks and keys, in which he was very curious, and took great delight; as likewiſe to the perſon who had the ſuperintendance of his rabbits. Alexander the Great is ſaid to have made love, when he had nothing elſe to do. Other kings, as reported, have amuſed themſelves in making buttons, and other baubles, when releaſed from the affairs of ſtate. Why might not Lewis XVI. do as much? Though by all accounts he does not want capacity, many circumſtances combined unfortunately to cramp the improvement and exertion of it; and it may, I believe, be truly ſaid that all his misfortunes aroſe, added to his own eaſy and unſuſpecting temper, to the want of that political ſcience and knowledge, ſo eſſential to every ſovereign prince.

One of his ſecretaries (Septchaines by name) having tranſlated, by his order, Gibbon's Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, into French, omitted a paſſage wherein the author ſays, that the reigns of the different races of the French monarchs concluded in weak princes; and poſſibly the preſent race is threatened with the ſame fate.

The king, who underſtands Engliſh a little, perceived the blank, and tranſlated the paſſage, diverting himſelf much at the caution and delicacy of the ſecretary, as alſo at the prediction of the author.

The name of Gibbon obliges me to remark, that it is much to be feared that he wrote the aboveſaid hiſtory with the ſame view and in the ſame ſpirit as Voltaire. Their ideas and principles ſeem nearly congenial, if we may judge from their writings. The xv and xvi chapters of his firſt volume are filled with invectives and ſatires on the lives and deportment of the primitive chriſtians. And in many part of his work, are frequently interſperſed ſuch reflections and anecdotes (not always indeed *duly* authenticated) as tend to diſgrace and depreciate that religion which all Europe, and his own native country in particular, had thought proper to adopt and reverence. If the attempt is not judicious, it may be deemed indeed bold and daring, for ſuch principles have undoubtedly overturned both the religion and government of France; and if they were adopted here, would ſoon, by their baneful influence, create the ſame confuſion in this country. For without religion there can be no morals, and conſequently no

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ſubordination, but what ariſes from the force and terror of the laws. And what are laws, ſays Horace, without morals? Quid vanæ leges ſine moribus efficient?

But to return to my ſubject. I gave you a ſpecimen of the invectives which have been ſo liberally beſtowed by Voltaire upon the clergy. Theſe (excuſe me for repeating) added to the tempting bait, which their riches held forth, completely wrought their ruin and deſtruction. The ſame torrent of abuſe, though indiſcriminately levelled at all ſovereign princes, was particularly aimed at Lewis XVI. and finally involved him in all thoſe calamities which he has ſince experienced. But ſtrange to relate! It is to the chriſtian religion they attribute all their evil deeds. For according to their logic, if the religion is bad, the clergy who teach it muſt be ſo, and princes, who profeſs it, are conſequently included in the cenſure. Thus they overturn both church and ſtate with a wet finger.

Let us however attend to ſome of their illuminating principles. "The chriſtian religion," ſays a certain modern philoſopher, "is a collection of abſurdities, and the unnatural production of all the ancient ſuperſtitions. It is a ſanguinary religion, which

" transforms princes into tyrants, and the " people into ſlaves.—A true chriſtian can " have no idea of ſound morality. At the " beſt he can only be a uſeleſs miſanthrope, " or a reſtleſs and turbulent fanatic.—How " often do we ſee the moſt religious princes " undertake the moſt unjuſt wars; prodi- " gally waſting the blood and treaſure of " their ſubjects; tearing the bread from the " mouths of the poor; conniving at, and " even commanding every ſpecies of robbery " and plunder; committing all kinds of in- " juſtice and rapacity. Among the clergy " we meet with nothing but pride, avarice, " ſenſuality, the ſpirit of domination, re- " venge, &c.—It was religion that begot and " foſtered tyranny and deſpotiſm. Kings " were ſervilely ſtiled the repreſentatives of " God. They conſequently become abſo- " lute like him.—Their arbitrary commands " too frequently gave a ſanction to violence, " rapine and oppreſſion, &c. &c." (Pref. to the important inquiry.)

I muſt obſerve that the abettors of theſe levelling principles, like pirates, who often fight under falſe colours, frequently diſguiſe themſelves under fictitious names, ſo that it becomes a matter of ſome difficulty to aſcer-

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tain the real authors. This unworthy ſubterfuge, ſo congenial to thoſe who write againſt principle and conſcience, has often been made uſe of by Voltaire. His writings have appeared under the names of Bolingbroke, a Quaker, a Preſbyterian, a Chineſe, &c. &c. yet the cloven foot has always been diſcovered, though ſo artfully concealed under the maſk of deceit and hypocriſy. Whether or not he is the author of the book before me (the Important Inquiry) I will not venture to affirm for the reaſon above mentioned. But to thoſe who have read his avowed works I dare appeal; and am confident that they will not heſitate to agree with me, that they have met with invectives, both againſt the church and ſtate, to the full as injurious as thoſe I have tranſcribed.

In the many letters I have written upon the ſubject of the French revolution, I have endeavoured to trace the cauſes which produced that aſtoniſhing and unfortunate event. One however, which I have not as yet noticed, ſtrikes me in a very forcible manner; and though it ill becomes me even to hint at, much leſs to pronounce upon the ſecret decrees of providence, yet I cannot help ſaying that the exceſs of corruption both of faith

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and morals, which has pervaded the generality of the French nation, ſeems to me to have deprived them of thoſe lights and of that aſſiſtance from above, which they ſo neceſſarily ſtand in need of in the formation of their new government.

The manner in which they have proceeded, and ſtill ſeem to proceed, in a certain degree juſtifies the idea. In too many inſtances we ſee them act like men bereft of their ſenſes, and therefore are apt to conclude that they are totally given up to the guidance and direction of their own powers and abilities. 'Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat.

" That long concatenation of particular " cauſes, however," (to uſe the words of a worthy French biſhop of the laſt century) " which make and unmake empires, depends " upon the ſecret orders of divine provi- " dence. God from the higheſt heavens " holds the reins of all the kingdoms of the " earth. He hath all hearts in his hands. " Sometimes he gives a looſe to them, and " thereby moveth all mankind. He it is who " propoſes effects in their remoteſt cauſes, " and he it is who ſtrikes thoſe great ſtrokes, " the counterſtroke whereof is of ſuch ex-

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" tenſive conſequence. Let us talk no more " of chance or of fortune; what is chance " in our uncertain councils, is a concerted " deſign in a higher council. Thereby is ve- " rified the ſaying of the apoſtle, that *God is* " *the bleſſed and only Potentate*, the King of " Kings, and Lord of Lords, who cauſes all " revolutions by an immutable council; who " gives, and takes away power; who transfers " it from one man to another; from one " houſe to another; from one people to ano- " ther, to ſhow that they all have it only bor- " rowed, and that it is he alone in whom it " naturally reſides." With this ſenſible re- mark, moſt becoming and meet for us blind and limited mortals here on earth to adopt, I conclude my epiſtle; and wiſhing you health, proſperity, and inexperience of all re- volutions whatever, I ſubſcribe myſelf

Dear SIR, &c.

London,
Feb. 15th, 1792.

PARAGRAPHS

PARAGRAPHS

FOR THE

ST. JAMES'S CHRONICLE,

ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE EMPEROR,

MARCH 15, 1792*.

THE ſudden and premature death of Leopold, late Emperor of Germany, muſt chill the heart of every reflecting perſon with horror and diſmay, if the firſt report which was generally received, be true, that he died by poiſon. It muſt make us tremble, not only for the future fate of kings and princes, but alſo for ourſelves. For what ſecurity can there be for any deſcription of men, if ſuch diabolical meaſures are taken, againſt the black and treacherous deeds of the dark aſſaſſin? When any ſet of men maintain ſuch principles, as prevail particularly in the de-

* This paragraph was inſerted in the St. James's Chronicle on the 17th inſtant.

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mocratic faction in France, added to the contempt which has been ſo frequently manifeſted for the Emperor in the Aſſembly itſelf, and the inſults which the mob have been permitted, or rather inſtigated to offer to his perſon in effigy, it cannot be imputed to a want of charity if the ſtrongeſt ſuſpicions might have fallen on that nation. Since the Aſſembly has thought proper to *deify* a man (Mirabeau) who appears to have been one of the inſtigators of thoſe acts of blood; who ſeems to have thought that crimes are neceſſary inſtruments of policy; who, with many others of the ſame caſt, avowed thoſe ſentiments openly and without diſguiſe in the Aſſembly itſelf, it cannot be ſurpriſing that men ſhould have retained at this moment a very unfavorable idea of the melancholy event which has juſt taken place; at leaſt till ſuch evidence is adduced as incontrovertibly proves the fallacy of their ſuſpicions.

The great leaders of the Jacobine clubs, thoſe very ſocieties, whom Meſſrs. Price, the Birmingham-doctor, &c. have particularly choſen to correſpond with, have more than once hinted that it was a trifling offence in the people to murder a criminal whom *the laws could not reach.* M. Iſnard told the Aſ-

ſembly, when they were debating on a law againſt the emigrants, that "the vengeance "of the people was like the vengeance of "heaven, the terrible ſupplement to the laws." —Mirabeau on a certain occaſion pronounced that "the Ariſtocrats are grown inſolent "from their victory of yeſterday; a fort-"night ago they dared not, *for their own* "*ſafety*, have objected to the propoſal." Let us compare this ſentence with ſimilar words uſed by the ſame orator. He ſaid "that the "Emperor of Germany would be unwilling "to engage in the quarrel, when he recol-"lected what an hoſtage was *in the hands of* "*the French.*" And again; "The puniſh-"ment of one Vizier will become a leſſon to "another."

It plainly appears then that the threats of murder and aſſaſſination were the favorite argument of that ambitious demagogue and others of thoſe ſocieties. And as Tom. Paine ſays *the people are apt ſcholars*, it might naturally be feared that ſome villain of that deſcription ſhould take the hint, and diſpatch the Emperor, whom *the laws could not reach.*

* MARCH 27.

THERE is an old prejudice exiſting in this country, and by repeated experience too well founded, that the French nation is of ſuch a reſtleſs and ambitious nature that they never remain inactive whenever the poſſibility of doing miſchief to their neighbours occurs. We might however have reaſonably ſuppoſed this reſtleſs diſpoſition to have been done away in the maſs of other political ſins imputed to their former government; and the more ſo, ſince they have by a ſolemn public act diſclaimed all wars and conqueſts, and ſolicit the *union of nations, and the fraternal embraces of the friends of liberty.* Theſe however are only words. They will not ſtand the teſt of facts, and it is to facts that the appeal is made. It is therefore ſincerely to be hoped that when Engliſhmen are informed how little their actions accord with theſe pompous profeſſions, they will ſtill retain their wonted prejudices, and not be deceived by ſuch bombaſt and high ſounding language. Let them remember that at all times a falſe friend is worſe than an open

* It appeared in the St. James's Chronicle on the 29th of March.

enemy. In all countries there will be parties. From various circumſtances it is impoſſible that all people ſhould think alike. The great object then of theſe artful French politicians is to foment differences among their neighbours, to ſet the people by the ears, and to profit, as occaſion may ſerve, by their diſcontents. For to aim at the poſſeſſion of any country *by conqueſt* would be too barefaced, and give the lie direct to their pompous decrees and reſolutions of *avoiding wars, and of keeping peace with all mankind.* They chuſe the ſafer, though not more honorable method of their reverend correſpondent, the Birmingham doctor. "They lay a train of gun-"powder" (to uſe his own words) "under "the old fabric, which a ſingle ſpark may "hereafter inflame, ſo as to produce an in-"ſtantaneous exploſion." Such a mode of proceeding is more congenial to their dark policy, and in a manner ſaves their credit with the majority of mankind, who do not obſerve and ſcrutinize their actions, eſpecially where they lie at a diſtance, with all that attention which the magnitude of the evil requires. It was in this underhand manner they got poſſeſſion of Avignon and the *Comtat de Venaiſſin.* They would have done as much, had they been

been ſucceſsful at the moment in their intrigues, at Geneva, Berne in Switzerland, and in Auſtrian Flanders. In other places, ſuch as Liege, and more eſpecially in this country, where their emiſſaries are very buſy, they are content with viewing things at a greater diſtance. The oblique cenſures, however, which they are continually caſting on our government and conſtitution prove that they flatter themſelves that they ſhall profit at ſome future period by the anarchy and confuſion they are endeavouring to create. Let then the fate of Avignon be a warning to Britons.

Avignon and its appendages, moſt people know, were purchaſed by Pope Clement VI. of Joan Counteſs of Provence, and Queen of Jeruſalem, Naples and Sicily, in the year 1352, for 80000 golden florins. Before ſhe died ſhe adopted Lewis of France, Duke of Anjou, the ſon of King John, for her heir and ſucceſſor. Avignon however was not a part of that ſucceſſion. Her right to it ſhe had transferred to Clement VI. for a valuable conſideration, as above ſaid. The popes enjoyed the ſovereignty of it to the preſent time without any interruption, if we except that the French kings, when they quarrelled with the

Popes,

Popes, often ſeized this defenceleſs ſtate, and kept it as a depoſit in their hands, till their diſputes were amicably adjuſted. Thus we ſee that the Popes could plead a preſcriptive right of 439 years, which, added to a legal purchaſe muſt make a title good, if any ſuch exiſts upon earth. If the poſſeſſion of Avignon was neceſſary for the peace and tranquillity of the French kingdom, there cannot be a doubt but it would have been ceded upon juſt and equitable terms, for its revenues could be no juſt object to the See of Rome, as they barely ſupported the charges of government. The greateſt advantage aroſe from the extent of patronage, and in being a place of refuge for the Popes in times of war or ſedition. The government was mild, and the people enjoyed a kind of happy indolence until the French had taught them the fatal and ſenſeleſs leſſon on the *rights of Man*, which, after cauſing a deluge of blood to be ſpilt between citizen and citizen, overturned *the rights* of ſociety. The injuſtice, however, as well as the abſurdity of the undertaking after all their pompous renunciations of conqueſts, occaſioned violent debates in the National Aſſembly. Both were too ſelf-evident not to extort from the majority a decree that

" Avignon

"Avignon formed *no part* of the French "empire." This act greatly diſappointed the deſigning faction. The mob however, that powerful engine of crafty ſedition, was at hand, and ſet upon M. de Clermont Tonnere who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the debate. He was inſulted, and threatened both with the fatal lantern and the deſtruction of his houſe and property. Thus they ſilenced all the reſt, and (as uſual) carried the day. Upon which it was ſhrewdly obſerved that "the people "had given an important leſſon to the Aſ-"ſembly." Things being brought to this iſſue, overlooking the injuſtice and abſurdity of the enterprize, after all their fine declarations, they boldly decreed that Avignon being an object of importance and of convenience to the ſtate, it ſhould henceforth be united to the French empire. In the courſe of this buſineſs however ſuch a deluge of blood was ſhed by the contending parties, which the Aſſembly had pitted againſt each other, that it was impoſſible they could juſtify it in the face of the world any longer. They affected therefore to receive the intelligence of the horrid ſcenes, which they themſelves had inſtigated, with the ſcreams of a knot of hyſterical women aſſembled at a tragedy. The letter,

ter, as the ſecretary read it, which communicated the * bloody intelligence, dropped from his hands. But ſuch only were the dupes of this horrid farce, who were ignorant of their vile machinations among the inhabitants of Avignon, and thoſe who never heard of the aſſertions of the Aſſembly itſelf, frequently repeated within theſe walls, "That to con-"demn the revolution of Avignon, was to "condemn the revolution of France, for "they both ſtood upon the ſame footing." It might be added, *and carried into execution in the ſame bloody and treacherous manner.*

TO BE CONTINUED.

* Among other facts, that above ſixty citizens, who had been confined for ſeveral months in a dark dungeon, were taken from thence, and put to death. Their bodies were thrown into a well, and finally diſcovered by the ſtench; That others were hung up, and their dying convulſions inſulted by the mob, crying out, *Dance, Dance, ye dogs of Ariſtocrats.*

APRIL 2.

IN the laſt paper a ſhort ſketch was adduced in regard of the perfidiouſneſs of the French in the affairs of Avignon. The uninformed reader will now perceive that they have been equally buſy in other places, although, *not as yet* equally ſucceſsful. Geneva has been long divided into parties, and their civil diſſenſions have of late been fomented underhand by thoſe men who are called, by the abuſe of words, French patriots, and particularly by the writers who aſſiſted Mirabeau in the periodical paper, called *Le Courier de Provence*, which he regularly publiſhed. In the beginning of laſt year (1791) things being brought to a certain degree of maturity, the ſignal of an intended revolt was given by ſinging the famous ſong * *Ca ira* under the windows of the magiſtrates. After conſigning all the Ariſtocrates to the lantern in the

* This trifling air, which is very gay and lively, has been conſtantly the ſignal of revolt. Twice it has been attempted in the Haymarket Theatre. Ought not the abettors to be noticed and duly puniſhed?

ſong, they added *and all the citizens alſo.* In the month of February an open attack was made upon the town by the neighbouring peaſants, and it was apprehended that a party within the walls would open the gates, and give up their adverſaries to be plundered by the rabble. All the citizens got under arms, and continued ſo for ſome days, till the inſurgents finding that the French peaſants of the *Pays* (the country) of *Gex* did not join them as was expected, returned to a ſtate of tranquillity. This attempt was ſuppoſed to have been inſtigated by a man who had been once a democrate of Geneva, and now become a Frenchman, and elected Mayor of *Gex.*

In the mean while the French journaliſts, who repeat with tranſport the news of every inſurrection in every corner of Europe, expreſſed particular ſatisfaction at the troubles of Geneva, and aſſured their countrymen, "that Geneva would ſoon follow the example "of Avignon, and demand to be incorpo-"rated with the French empire." This circumſtance opened the eyes of the people of Geneva, who cordially and unanimouſly united together in defence of the common cauſe, and have ever ſince (though ſtill divided among themſelves in other reſpects) been very

very ſuſpicious of French patriots and French politics.—In Berne thoſe politics did not ſucceed better, for they had the fate of Avignon before their eyes. This inclination in the French to kindle a civil war in Switzerland is grievouſly complained of by Necker in his laſt book. "Theſe little ſtates," ſays he, "till the French revolutioniſts ſent their "emiſſaries among them, had the *weakneſs* "to think themſelves happy."

The letter from one of the political clubs, which was lately diſperſed through Auſtrian Flanders is an additional proof of that ſpirit of intrigue, of the reſtleſs temper, the artful, and underhand interference of the French in the affairs of other people. The ſubſtance of this letter is as follows. "Gentlemen, "You know the value of liberty. You wiſh-"ed for it, but unfortunate events have pre-"vented you from obtaining it. The friends "of the French conſtitution *embrace the whole* "*world*" (a fine bombaſt idea!) "in their "ſyſtem of philanthropy, and in virtue of that "right, Sirs, they expreſs their hopes that "when * you return again into your country, "you will ſcatter the ſeeds of our beneficent

* They were obliged to fly for rebellious practices.

" projects, that they may produce a plentiful " harveſt."

TO BE CONTINUED.

APRIL 7.

IN the progreſs of the inquiry concerning the underhand and artful interference of the French in the affairs of other ſtates, we find that Liege revolted againſt its prince and biſhop ſoon after the celebrated 14th of July, the day of the grand confederation at Paris. The malcontents kept up a correſpondence with the republican French leaders, but drawing on itſelf the reſentment of the German empire, they have been obliged to ſubmit, and conſequently to relinquiſh their patriotic aſſociates. Though their newſpaper and journals of literature have been a little more indulgent to this nation, (for reaſons beſt known to themſelves) than they have been to their other neighbours, yet upon ſeveral occaſions they have expreſſed a ſovereign contempt for our form and mode of government, and have enlarged upon the miſeries of the people in conſe-

conſequences of it; and all this not without ſome deſign. Nothing can more prove the indirect and oblique method they take of depreciating our conſtitution, than the * letter which the Aſſembly cauſed to be written to the States of Penſylvania. "We eſtabliſh" it is therein ſaid, "under the conſtitutional "authority of a king the ſame liberty as you "have eſtabliſhed under republican forms; "*a liberty very different from that, which com-* "*poſed of charters and privileges, alters, by he-* "*reditary diſtinctions, civil equality, that unalie-* "*nable patrimony of men united in ſociety, which* "*balancing the eternal ſovereignty of the people* "*by the prerogatives of birth and the rights of* "*chance, yet ſhows on the bold features of a re-* "*generated nation the ſcars of its ancient ſla-* "*very.*"—The famous decree for the abolition of the French nobility, carries in its very preamble the ſtrongeſt features of that conceit and vanity which would ſquare the opinions of all the world to its own; of which it is difficult for other nations to ſpeak, without betraying a little reſentment. The Aſſembly were not ſatisfied with declaring that hereditary no-

* This was a letter of thanks, becauſe they had decreed a ſhort mourning for Dr. Franklin.

bility

bility is incompatible with *the liberty of France*, it declares in general terms, that *hereditary nobility is incompatible with a free ſtate*; and thus, by implication, declares all Europe to be enſlaved. The French newſpaper writers and pamphleteers greedily catch up every lie which they think may poſſibly degrade this nation, and create a confuſion in it. At one time they announced that the Houſe of Lords was to be aboliſhed. At another that a riot, ſimilar to that of 1780, was hourly expected; that the guards had been ordered to hold themſelves in readineſs, and that they had refuſed to act; that the Commons had refuſed ſupplies to Mr. Pitt in ſupport of the quarrel with Spain; that the King in anger had diſſolved them. They then concluded that the Engliſh people had riſen, and attacked the nobility. The *Mercure* (a French newſpaper) of the 23d of July 1791 makes the following remark on a pamphlet called *La Police de Paris*, which was written to cenſure the police of the former government. "We cannot "conclude this article without recommend-"ing to the curioſity of our readers a paſſage "on the police of London. The author ob-"ſerves ſeveral monſtrous defects. — But "what is more aſtoniſhing" (and truly aſtoniſh-

aſtoniſhing it is) " is the exceſſive miſery of " an immenſe portion of the people.——The " conſequences" he adds, " may be *dreadful* " *on the eve of thoſe ſhocks which threaten go-* " *vernment.*" Then commenting on ſome paſſages from the laſt advertiſements of the Conſtitutional Society (which he miſtakes for a petition) he concludes with ſaying " that " the time approaches when juſtice will be " demanded in ſo firm a tone, that it cannot " be refuſed." " In a country" he adds, " where people ſpeak in that ſtile, in the bo- " ſom of a capital where the immenſe popula- " tion preſents the aſpect of a miſery ſo hi- " deous, that it is not to be compared to " Paris; in ſuch a ſituation of things how " long can ſubſiſt the political abuſes of Eng- " land complained of by *the friends of the* " *conſtitution*, the friends of the French revo- " lution? An intereſting queſtion, and worthy " of the attention of the cabinet of St. " James's!"—At the moment this was writ- ten, it may be with great probability ſuſpected that they were waiting for an account of the celebration of the 14th of July, (1791) and indulging themſelves in the ſavage expectation that the rabble of London would treat a Lord Mayor, or a Secretary of State, as cruelly as

the

the mob of Paris had treated Meſſrs. Berthier and Foulon.

TO BE CONTINUED.

MAY 10.

WHEN the ſtate is in danger of an attack, every citizen ought to take up arms. When libellous ſcribblers are ſuffered to impeach the ſyſtem of government and the conſtitution of a country with impunity which the majority reſpects, every man intereſted in its preſervation, as procuring to him the invaluable bleſſings of peace and tranquillity, ought to take the alarm, and, with all the powers he poſſeſſes, endeavour to counteract the baneful and noxious principles which are ſo daringly diſſeminated throughout the realm. If a hungry and half-famiſhed printer, to procure himſelf a dinner, ventures to publiſh a tale of ſcandal, he is inſtantly, and often juſtly puniſhed. But the wretch who ſo groſsly inſults the nation at large by cenſuring their government and conſtitution; who treats the ſupreme magiſtrate thereof, whom the majority of that nation reſpects and reverences, with

with a contempt and indignity, with a *blackguardiſm* (if ſuch a word may be uſed) which beggars all deſcription; who dares not only ſubſcribe his name, but even at the moment that he reprobates all titles and diſtinctions, ſigns himſelf *Secretary to the American Congreſs for foreign affairs*, &c. who finally boaſts to all the world that his libellous pamphlets have run through more editions than that of a * gentleman who has wrote in favor of peace, order and decency; and that it will be ſufficient to give him an anſwer when the ſaid publication has had † equal ſucceſs; that ſuch a wretch ſhould be ſuffered to range at large, and inſult the public, (let it be repeated) is a paradox which few people can underſtand.—Is it out of contempt for his perſon, or his principles, that he has remained ſo long un-noticed? But ſurely the man who inſults a whole nation; who libels, defames, and ſatirizes the head and chief governor of that nation, is as much an object of legal puniſhment, as the miſerable retailers of ſcandal, who are puniſhed almoſt

* Mr. Burke.

† This can never happen till Mr. Burke's pamphlet is diſtributed gratis, like the *Rights of Man*.

every day. It cannot be from a contempt of his principles, for they ſtrike at the very vitals, the very eſſence of the preſent government and conſtitution of this country; and, if adopted in the whole, would eradicate every bleſſing of ſocial life. They tend to inflame the minds of the people, who greedily ſwallow every thing, though ever ſo prepoſterous, which flatters their paſſions. Thus they become diſſatisfied with the government they live under, and not only wiſh for a change, but are ready to promote it whenever an opportunity offers. "Principiis obſta, ſerò "medecina paratur" is a wiſe old adage, which may be engliſhed thus: "A ſtitch in "time, ſaves nine." A few days previous to the riots in 1780, Lord N—— was forewarned of the dangerous aſpect of things. Brother Lazarus was however then aſleep, and paid no attention to the information. We know too well the conſequence of his Lordſhip's ſupineneſs and inattention, to dwell farther upon the ſubject. The ſame cauſes however have generally the ſame effects. And although a Paine's mob may not ſucceed better (for it is but too true that miſchief they wiſh for, and miſchief they are ready to do, whenever the opportunity offers) than that of Lord George Gordon,

Gordon, yet even the effects of the latter are too recent in moſt men's minds, not to make them dread a repetition of the calamities which the nation then experienced. That miſchief they wiſh for, and miſchief they are ready to do, as has been obſerved, is evident from the writings not only of Paine, but likewiſe of thoſe of the ſame party. Let us attend to what the Birmingham doctor has ſaid upon this ſubject. "We lay" ſays he, "a train of gun-powder under the old "fabric of error and ſuperſtition, which a "ſingle ſpark may hereafter inflame ſo as to "produce an inſtantaneous exploſion." In an advertiſement from the Conſtitutional Society we read the following paragraph. "The "time approaches when juſtice will be de-"manded in ſo firm a tone, that it cannot be "refuſed." That trifling ſong *Ca ira* has been the ſignal of revolt and ſedition wherever French politics have prevailed, or the attempt to introduce them has been made, as at Paris, Avignon, Berne, Liege, Bruxelles, and even in this country. It is well known that it was twice at leaſt attempted in the Haymarket theatre. But things at that moment were not ripe for execution. It behoves then thoſe, who are intruſted with the guardianſhip

dianſhip and ſuperintendence of peace and order, to keep a watchful eye over that portion of malcontents who are ready to revive the ſame horrid ſcenes which the nation unfortunately experienced in the year 1780.—The ſpirit of ſedition loſes no opportunity; overlooks no advantage which it may acquire from the overſight and ill-policy of its opponents. They declaim with violence againſt the pride and tyranny of ariſtocracy, as may be gathered from the following ſpeech of Mr. Erſkine at * Newark. He ſaid, "that "it had been by acts of oppreſſion and perſe- "cution by the nobles of ſome neighbouring "kingdoms, that the nobility were firſt "brought into diſgrace, and afterwards into "ruin. He was himſelf of noble blood, and "therefore ſhould in ſome degree lament its "downfall, as he knew it was ſometimes ac- "companied by nobleneſs of mind. But the "hour was faſt approaching when the gaudy "trappings of the peerage would be torn off "by the avenging hand of popular retribu- "tion, for the purpoſe of expoſing to the "public eye the rotten and diſtorted carcaſe,

* He went to try the validity of two votes againſt the intereſt of the Duke of Newcaſtle.

"whoſe

" whoſe innumerable and execrable oppreſ-
" ſions had contaminated the garb that co-
" vered it*." At a time when every effort is ſtrained to make the nobility odious, and to level all diſtinctions, as they have done in France, Lord Lauderdale's ſpeech in the affair of Mr. Cookſey pointed out the wiſer courſe, which ought to have been taken by attentive and acute politicians. And however juſt, equitable and expedient it may be to aboliſh the ſlave-trade, it is certainly a delicate ſubject to debate upon at this preſent moment. The people in general, that is three fourths of this nation, underſtand nothing of it, and therefore are apt to form ideas which may prove in the end very diſtreſſing. The horrid ſcenes which have taken place in St. Domingo were but the conſequence of an ill-timed and miſplaced decree of the National Aſſembly, which paſſed on the 15th of May 1791, and which they were obliged to revoke on the 24th of September following. But the miſchief was done, and no one can tell when it will ceaſe.

* Extracted from Lloyd's Evening Poſt from March 28th to the 30th.

To

To conclude. Whatever abuſes there are exiſting in this country, (and no doubt but too many do exiſt, the inevitable conſequence of the hand of time) it is to be hoped they will be *quietly* and *calmly* done away; without noiſe, or tumult. Let us adopt the ſenſible remark of the Empreſs of Ruſſia to Mr. Howard, when he apprized her that there were many abuſes in the priſons in her dominions which ſtood in great need of reform. "Monſieur," ſaid ſhe, "il faut tirer un clous après l'autre." "Sir, we muſt draw one nail out after the "other."

FINIS.